THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • MONDAY • DECEMBER 16, 2024 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 16 • LATE CITY EDITION

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SUBSIDIARIES OF INDIAN PHARMA GIANTS RECALL PRODUCTS IN U.S.

Aurobindo Pharma, Glenmark and Zydus are recalling products due to manufacturing issues, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said

U.S. REGULATOR FLAGS PURITY CONCERNS

Aurobindo Pharma USA Inc is recalling over 1 lakh bottles of Cinacalcet tablets over "presence of N-nitroso Cinacalcet impurity" above prescribed limit, FDA said. Similarly, the US subsidiary of Glenmark Pharmaceuticals is recalling 90,000 bottles of Diltiazem Hydrochloride capsules over "presence of N-nitroso-Desmethyl-Diltiazem impurity" above the US regulator's limit

CLASS II NATIONWIDE RECALL INITIATED

- Zydus (USA) Inc is recalling 4,404 packs of Esomeprazole Magnesium for Delayed-Release Oral Suspension due to errors in labelling
- The companies have initiated Class II nationwide recall. According to the US regulator, such an action is taken when products can cause temporary or medically reversible adverse health consequences

20%

INDIA'S SHARE IN THE GLOBAL SUPPLY OF GENERIC MEDICINES

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Fadnavis expands Maharashtra cabinet with 39 new ministers

Focus on young, new faces; 19 berths go to BJP, Shiv Sena gets 11, and NCP 9 ministers

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @ Mumbai

MAHARASHTRA Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Sunday effected the first expansion of his ministry with 33 Cabinet ministers and six ministers of state. Governor C P Radhakrishnan administered the oath to all 39 ministers, many of them fresh faces, at the Raj Bhavan in Nagpur on the eve of Maharashtra state assembly's winter session. Portfolios will be allocated in the next two to three days, Fadnavis said.

Among the newly sworn-in ministers, 19 are from the BJP (16 cabinet berths and 3 MoS); 11 from the Shiv Sena (9 cabinet and 2 MoS); and 9 from NCP (8 cabinet ministers and 1 MoS).

With this, the BJP has 20 ministers including CM Devendra Fadnavis, Shiv Sena has 12 including deputy CM Eknath Shinde, and NCP 11 including deputy CM Ajit Pawar.

Notably, 12 ministers from the Shinde-led government were dropped to give representation to young leaders. Those dropped include BJP leaders Sudhir Mungantiwar, Vijay Kumar Gavit, and Ravindra Chavan; NCP leaders Chhagan Bhujbal, Dilip Walse Patil, Anil Patil, and Dharmaraobaba Atram; and Shiv Sena leaders Tanaji Sawant and Deepak Kesarkar.

Maharashtra Governor C P Radhakrishnan, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, Deputy CMs Ajit Pawar and Eknath Shinde during the swearing-in of cabinet ministers | PTI

Ceremony held at Nagpur's Raj Bhavan

The ceremony at the Raj Bhavan in Nagpur was the first to be held in the state's second capital in 33 years. The last such event was Sudhakarrao Naik cabinet's expansion in 1991

While focusing on fresh faces, Fadnavis also included some experienced hands in his team. Among the young BJP ministers are Jaykumar Rawal, Pankaja Munde, Ashok Uike, Ashish Shelar, Shivendrasinh Bhosale, Jaykumar Gore, Sanjay Savkare, Nitesh Rane, Akash Fundkar, Madhuri Misal, Pankaj Bhoyar, and Meghna Bordikar Sakore.

Meanwhile, Ajit Pawar denied berths to veterans Chhagan Bhujbal and Dilip Walse Patil to accommodate Dhananjay Munde, Dattatray Bharane, Aditi Tatkare, Manikrao Kokate, Narhari Zirwal, Makarand Patil, Babasaheb Patil, and Indranil Naik.

As for Eknath Shinde, he had a tough task to keep each one happy with a limited number of berths. Shiv Sena MLA Narendra Bhondekar resigned from all party posts after he was denied a berth in the new cabinet. Shiv Sena ministers include Sanjay Rathod, Uday Samant, Sanjay Shirsat, Pratap Sarnaik, Bharat Gogawale, Prakash Abitkar, Ashish Jaiswal, and Yogesh Kadam.

A senior BJP leader said the party has tried to keep the delicate balance of caste and regional representation in the new cabinet. "Each section of the society voted for us. Therefore, we wanted to give representatives to each section even if the faces from these societies were new. This is a new team under new leadership and we are hopeful that they will perform better," he said. P8

TECHIE SUICIDE CASE

Atul's wife, in-laws held, sent to judicial custody

RAKSHITH GOWDA @ Bengaluru

A week after 34-year-old software engineer Atul Subhash ended his life by hanging at his residence in Bengaluru's Marathahalli locality, his estranged wife Nikita Singhania, mother-in-law Nisha Singhania, and brother-in-law Anurag Singhania have been arrested on charges of abetment of suicide. The trio, during questioning, is said to have claimed innocence and have been remanded in judicial custody.

Nikita

Nisha

Anurag

Nikita's uncle, Sushil Singhania, who has also been named as an accused by the Marathahalli police, is yet to be arrested.

Speaking to the media on Sunday, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Whitefield division) Shivakumar Gunare said that based on a tip-off and other technical clues, Nikita was arrested from a paying-guest accommodation in Gurugram, Haryana. Her mother Nisha and brother Anurag were nabbed from a hotel in Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh. All three arrests were made on Saturday morning, and the trio has been brought to Bengaluru.

Shivakumar also said that Atul's son is currently staying with Nikita's relative and added that more information cannot be shared as he is a minor. Stating that Sushil is absconding, the DCP said efforts are on to trace him. "The investigating teams are also collecting other evidence in connection with the case," he added. A senior police officer told *TNIE* that the trio, during inquiry, defended themselves and claimed that the allegations made by Atul in the death note and the video are false.

The accused were produced before a magistrate and were shifted to Bengaluru Central Prison in Parappana Agrahara. P5

Rajya Sabha to hold debate on Constitution from today

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

RAJYA Sabha is expected to witness fiery debates between the government and the opposition on Monday as it begins a two-day debate on the Constitution to mark the 75th anniversary of the founding document's adoption.

It comes as the Lok Sabha, after two days of spirited discussions, wrapped up its debate on the Constitution on Saturday.

Rajya Sabha is also likely to see high-octane sessions, especially in the backdrop of a no-confidence motion moved against Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar by the opposition alleging bias.

Sources told this newspaper that BJP president JP Nadda will critique the Congress's historical record in adhering to the Constitution during its tenure in power. Key BJP members scheduled to participate include: Nirmala Sitharaman, Hardeep Puri and Kiren Rijiju. On the opposition side, the Trinamool Congress has tasked 10–11 MPs to speak on the Constitution. MPs from the Congress, RJD and SP will also participate.

9k science & math teachers for 22L primary school kids!

RISHITA KHANNA @ Bengaluru

KARNATAKA, known for its advancements in science and technology, has only 8,895 science and mathematics teachers for nearly 22 lakh students of Classes 1 to 5 in government primary schools.

The state has just 5,732 English teachers compared to 81,979 Kannada teachers for students of these classes, as per government data.

While officials claimed that guest teachers are hired to fill these gaps, educationists argued this is not a long-term solution. They warned that if this situation continues, many schools, especially in rural areas, could face closure.

According to experts, the consistent poor SSLC results that some districts or schools witness every year are an indirect, yet clear reflection of shortage of teachers at the primary level. When children are not taught properly, teachers and the government are at fault for failing to spark learning interest in them. The failure not only widens the urban-rural divide, but also the language divide, leaving many children behind.

Child rights activist Vasudev Sharma said that teaching in Kannada may help children grasp concepts faster. However, the severe shortage of subject teachers is crippling their learning.

"The current figures are shockingly low and reveal a systematic failure that stunts students' potential," he added.

When a child is not introduced to subject-based concepts at the primary level, it puts immense pressure on the teacher to make up for the gap. "The result is predictable: children are left to blindly memorise practical topics, with no real understanding," Sharma said.

Sometimes, students are forced to switch from Kannada to English medium schools after completing Class 5 or 8. This is nothing short of a crime as children are thrust into an environment where they cannot learn and humiliated for their inability, Sharma said. P5

Tahsildar's grouse: Panipuri wala leads a better life than we do

BR UDAYA KUMAR @ Holenarasipur

EXPRESSING anger against the way government offices function, and the stress on officials from their seniors, Holenarasipur Tahsildar KK Krishnamurthy said it was better to be a "panipuri wala or a gobi manchurian seller".

"By comparison, they lead stress-free lives. They are free to go on vacations with their families, and return home peacefully. They are satisfied with their routine work and private lives, and lead better lives than us. We government officials are unable to even take our families to temples due to continuous pressure from seniors, said Krishnamurthy.

He was speaking at the padgrahana programme of office-bearers of the Taluk State Government Employees' Association here on Saturday. A video of his speech targeting senior officials and the government went viral on social media on Sunday. Krishnamurthy said he is under pressure and unable to work due to torture and is also thinking of voluntary retirement. P5

ZAKIR HUSSAIN

IN ICU; CONDITION CRITICAL

Tabla maestro Ustad Zakir Hussain, who has been undergoing treatment at a US hospital for heart-related problem for the past two weeks, is critical, reports said

WPL MINI AUCTION

Dharavi to crorepati, Simran's dream rise

KALYANI MANGALE @ Bengaluru

SIMRAN SHAIKH was bought for her base price of ₹10 lakh by UP Warriorz at the inaugural Women's Premier League auction. A resident of Mumbai's Dharavi, Asia's biggest slums, Simran's poor returns in the 2023 season meant she was released by the franchise. The right-hand batter didn't find a team for the second edition held early this year.

Her father, Jahid Ali, an electrician, was in disbelief when Simran was bought by UP in February last year. Almost a year and 10 months later, Jahid is over the moon as his daughter has become the costliest buy at the WPL mini auction held in Bengaluru on Sunday. She was bought by Gujarat Giants for ₹1.90 crore.

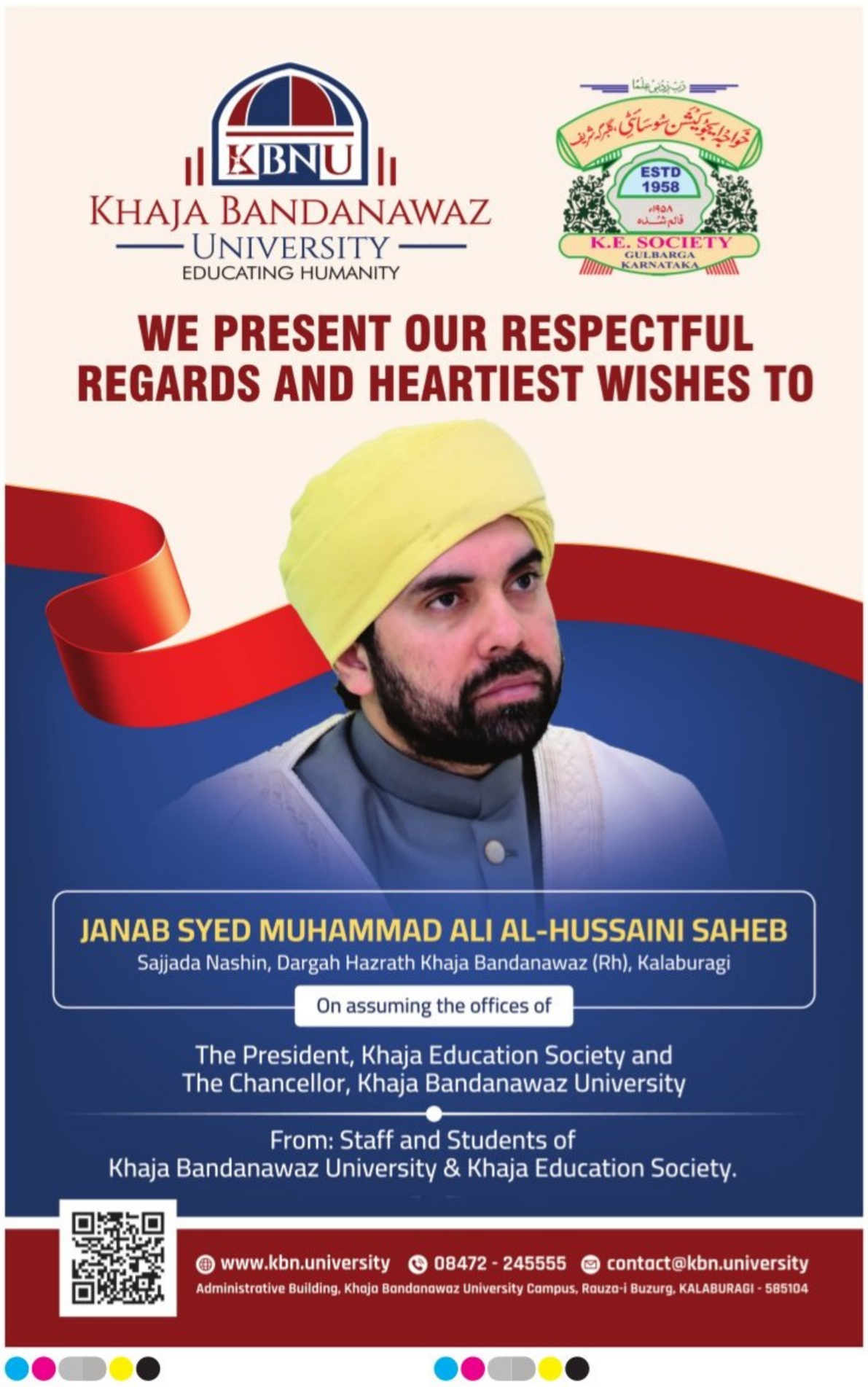
"She comes from Dharavi. If you look at it from the financial point of view, it is great for her that she is getting the opportunity once again. She has worked extremely hard for this and the results are there for everyone to see. It is important in terms of financial stability," Shaikh's coach and former India international Sunetra Paranjape told this daily.

Along with Paranjape, the Giants' head coach, Michael Klinger praised the journey of his player. "If we can change her life, not just for her, but for her family, it's fantastic. Mind you, this is not a charity given to her, she has earned this. She has put on some great performances in recent times. It is great to hear that this can change her life," he told this daily in an exclusive interview.

West Indies superstar Deandra Dottin was among the highest-paid overseas players at ₹1.70 cr and joined Mumbai girl Shaikh at Giants. Defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru persisted with a bid for Uttarakhand's Prema Rawat as she eventually joined them for ₹1.20 crore.

TN girl bags ₹1.6cr

Tamil Nadu's G Kamilini had one of the best days a player could ask for. Earlier in the day, playing for India for the first time in the U19 Asia Cup, the 16-year-old hit 29-ball 44 to bag player of the match trophy. A few hours later she was bought by Mumbai Indians for ₹1.60 crore.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THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU

ALMANAC TODAY
• Monday: 16.12.2024 • Year: Krodhi • Ayana: Dakshinayana
• Ritu: Hemanth • Masa: Margasira • Paksha: Shukla • Tithi: Prathami 1.04 pm
• Nakshatra: Ardra 2.49 am • Moon in Kataka Rashi • Rahukaala: 07:30 am to 09:00 am
• Gulikakala: 01:30 pm to 03:00 pm • Yamaganda: 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

WEATHER
MIN 13°C | MAX 27°C
FORECAST
Overcast

Sunrise 06.34 am
Sunset 05.56 pm
Moonrise 06.57 pm
Moonset 07.24 am

BDA SCRAPS PLAN TO DEMOLISH HEBBAL FLYOVER'S KR PURA RAMP

Metro realigns: Authority also plans to effect changes in Tumakuru loop

S LALITHA @ Bengaluru

IN a significant step in connection with the Hebbal flyover augmentation project undertaken by the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA), it has now decided not to demolish the ramp leading from KR Pura to the city. This follows a step initiated by the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) to shift its line slightly from the present alignment, said BDA officials. In another change of plan, it has also decided to effect changes in the existing Tumakuru loop. These moves will significantly reduce the time taken to complete the project by many months.

Ongoing construction work on Hebbal flyover in Bengaluru | ALLEN EGENUSE J

The much-delayed flyover project by BDA is being carried out a cost of Rs 106 crore. With the convergence of Metro and suburban rail projects at the spot, the need to accommodate various agencies delayed it considerably. The latest deadline for the project is June 2025 for Phase-I and December 2025 for full completion.

A senior official told TNIE, "Initially, the BDA planned to demolish the KR Pura ramp to make way for the Metro line. However, until Metro work began, we decided to use the ramp temporarily by making some adjustments. To facilitate this, a portion of the ramp, particularly at the turn was removed."

Two Metro lines go via the Hebbal flyover, the Kempapura to JP Nagar IVth Phase (Orange Line, Phase-3) and the Sarjapura to Hebbal (Phase-3A), the officials explained. "Metro officials recently informed us that they were shifting the alignment of their pillars slightly. This gives us some additional space. Hence, we decided at a crucial meet on December 11 that we will not demolish it but instead align it with the route towards the city. This also helps us save time," he added.

Rather than demolishing the Tumakuru loop as planned earlier, it has now decided to merge the loop along with two of the three new lanes that will be built by the BDA between Baptist Hospital and the railway tracks.

Despite repeated calls and messages, the Metro engineers concerned did not respond.

Additionally, BDA has also managed to secure permissions from the Railway Ministry's RDSO in Lucknow and the South Western Railway to build two spans, one measuring 19.33m and another measuring 35.03m which are being built above the live railway tracks at Hebbal for its project. "Railway officials visited the spot on Friday morning to inspect the material to be used in building the spans," said a source.

Backgrounder

In bid to decongest the jam-packed flyover, the project was proposed in 2015. It had a deadline of April 2018. Apart from the three new lanes being built, an unidirectional underpass for traffic from Tumakuru Road towards KR Pura is also being readied.

The initial cost of the Hebbal project was Rs 87 crore and it shot up later to Rs 106 crore with other additions. After work began, it came to a standstill for nearly two years from April 2019 when BMRCL said its line would run at the second level at the flyover and hence BDA cannot construct anything there.

In order to go ahead with the project, BDA later found a solution and agreed to build its roads at the first level itself though the width would get slightly reduced.

Banerjee unveils insights from his book 'Chhaunk'

B'LORE LIT FEST

RITIKA SARKAR @ Bengaluru

IN a world where perfectly staged food photos dominate social media feeds, nobel laureate Abhijit Banerjee and Illustrator Cheyenne Oliver are offering something refreshingly different with their latest book, Chhaunk.

Instead of glossy, meticulously styled images, Indian-American economist Banerjee at the Bangalore Literature Fest on Sunday, said that they have chosen to use vibrant illustrations that capture the real essence of food—not just as an item on a plate, but as a shared experience that connects people.

Following the success of his previous work, 'Cooking to Save Your Life', Banerjee found inspiration for 'Chhaunk' in a more accessible and human-centered approach to food. While 'Cooking to Save Your Life' was a refined, high-end production, it was also met with limited appeal due to its high cost. With 'Chhaunk', Banerjee and Oliver set out to create something more grounded, something that resonated with everyday readers, celebrating food in a way that everyone could relate to.

Booklovers on the second day of the 13th edition of the Bangalore Literature Festival at LaLit Ashok in Bengaluru on Sunday | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

"We did not want to just create a coffee-table book. We wanted to reflect the reality of food, its cultural richness, and the joy it brings when shared with others," Banerjee said.

For Oliver, the decision to illustrate rather than photograph was born out of a desire to allow room for interpretation. "Photographs don't leave much to the imagination. You know exactly how it's supposed to look. But with illustrations, you have more freedom to express the atmosphere, the people, the moments that food creates," she said.

Much of the book's artwork shifts the focus from food alone to the people around it—cooking together, sharing meals, cleaning up afterward. According to Oliver, the social aspects of food were central to their vision. "It's about more than just the food. It's about the conversations, the connections, the quiet moments between people, whether in the kitchen or at the dining table," she mentioned.

Humour, too, plays an important role in Banerjee's writing. Known for his witty observations, he humorously challenges the rigid, scientific approach often associated with cooking. "How many of you have ever cut an onion by measuring it by the size of your earlobe?" Banerjee jokes in his earlier book. But as he explains, it's not about the humour—it's about cutting through the pretension of exact measurements. "Cooking is not about precision. It's about realness. It's about trusting your senses and making something that feels right," he said.

The book also delves into the complexities of globalisation's impact on food culture. Banerjee addresses the tension between popularisation and the dilution or misappropriation of culinary traditions. He emphasises that cultures have always influenced each other, and the beauty of food lies in this fluid exchange, not in rigid ownership or control. In the end, Chhaunk is not just a cookbook—it's an exploration of the connections, laughter, and shared moments that happen around the table. Through illustrations that tell a deeper story, Banerjee and Oliver invite readers to rediscover the joy of food as a communal experience.

B'LURU GIRL WINS 6 MEDALS AT NATIONAL ROLLER SKATING CHAMPIONSHIP

Bengaluru: A class 10 student from Bengaluru won six medals at the 62nd National Roller Skating Championship. Varshini Aparna, who represented Karnataka in the 14-17 age group category, won two gold medals, two silver medals, and two bronze medals, showcasing her exceptional talent at the competition held in Mysuru from December 5 to 15. Varshini, a student at Nirmala Rani School in Basaveshwara Nagar was trained under coach GV Raghavendra at Best Club Skating Club in Rajarajeshwari Nagar. Expressing her happiness over her success, Varshini said, "I aim to represent the country in international competitions," she said.

FROM MOON TO MARS

Spacesuits, habitat pods display steal spotlight

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

TO highlight the growing partnership between Italy and India in space exploration, the Italian Consulate, in collaboration with Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched 'From Moon to Mars' exhibition at the Science Gallery. The exhibition is scheduled to run for 44 days, until January 26 and aligns with the Italian National Space Day on December 16.

The exhibition is split into two sections-- the Foyer and the Nature Lab, offering an engaging glimpse into space exploration.

In the Foyer, visitors can explore a detailed model of ISRO's historic Chandrayaan-3 lunar module, alongside replicas of the LVM3 and PSLV launch vehicles. The section also showcases the Habitat Pod, an innovative simulation of extraterrestrial living conditions developed by Indian start-up Aakaa Space, which was recently tested in Ladakh.

Additionally, there are pictures and information highlighting the unique collaboration between the US-based Axiom Space and Italian fashion brand Prada to design a cutting-edge and stylish spacesuit.

In the Nature Lab, visitors can explore the exhibition From the Moon to Mars. The captivating display delves into the exploration of Earth's closest celestial neighbours, showcasing key milestones in lunar and Martian exploration, while also highlighting Italy's significant contributions to these ground-breaking missions.

On Sunday, the exhibition featured four sessions centred on the theme Living in Space, focusing on innovative solutions to address unique challenges of extraterrestrial living.

The sessions explored sustainable innovations essential for supporting human life in space, to address physiological and biomechanical challenges.

While the session 'Microgravity and the Future of Space Nutrition: Unveiling the Potential of Arthrospira platensis' focused on addressing the nutritional challenges of space exploration, emphasising the use of Arthrospira platensis as a sustainable solution for supporting life beyond Earth, session on the 'Response of the Human Body to Low Gravity: A Biomechanical Analysis' delved into how low gravity affects the human body, specifically its biomechanical functions, posing unique challenges for long-term space missions.

EXPRESS READ

Sri Vidya Public High School gets 4 awards

Bengaluru: Sri Vidya Public High School has been honoured with four prestigious FAP India awards, including the 'Best School Award' for academic achievement and the 'Best Principal Award' for innovative administration. Additionally, two teachers from the school were recognized with 'Best Teacher Awards', for their dedication and contributions to quality education.

Uber eyes Bengaluru for its shuttle bus services

AKNISREE KARTHIK @Bengaluru

WITH its shuttle bus service performing well in Kolkata and Delhi, Uber is actively engaging with the Karnataka government to secure required regulatory approval for introducing the service in Bengaluru.

The ride-hailing company plans to introduce the shuttle service but is still awaiting the nod from the government. It plans to operate 200 air-conditioned buses along the city's tech corridor on the Outer Ring Road, aiming to reduce congestion by offering commuters an alternative to personal vehicles.

The proposed service would run at 2-3 minutes intervals, allowing passengers to pre-book seats, get picked up from designated locations and be dropped at their destinations. Speaking to TNIE, Abhishek Padhye, Head of Regional Business Operations, Uber India and South Asia said, "The shuttle bus service is doing well in Kolkata and Delhi. We are confident we will receive approval to operate in Bengaluru soon and thereby help address the congestion in the city."

IT/BT Minister Priyank Kharge (right) and Uber India chief Prabhjeet Singh launch Uber Shuttle bus services in Bengaluru on Sunday | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

Highlighting Bengaluru's unique's challenges, he emphasised the severe traffic issues on ORR, where many tech companies are located and the potential impact of shuttle services could have on easing traffic. "Bengaluru's congestion issue is a more serious problem than that of Delhi and Kolkata. Among the routes that have a maximum on-boarding and off-boarding together, tech parks are a natural fit for this service. Bengaluru and Hyderabad are cities which have massive tech parks when compared to others."

To gather public support for Uber Shuttle, the company displayed the bus at the Bengaluru Tech Summit that was held here last month. The company explained the model to IT BT Minister Priyank Kharge and others at the summit to garner support for their service. The company is now awaiting the government's nod to begin operation.

Daily Starscope

PETER VIDAL

16TH December : The current time is crowded with powerful planetary aspects. If each one represents a different possibility then, taken together, they point to an excess of choice. If you don't like making up your mind you might not enjoy yourself but, if you're happy to experiment with different options, then you could be in your element.

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr. 20)
You've been through a dema-nding phase, and you may imagine that certain cares now lie in the past. How-ever, before you are finally free, you will have to face up to old trou-bles one more time, so take heart and be bold. One thi-ng in your favour is that your level of sheer determi-nation makes it virtually impossible for them to get the better of you.

TAURUS (Apr. 21 - May 21)
You should be on top form today, now that lunar influences are batting on your team, so to speak. Allow a new enthusiasm free rein this morning but get down to serious business around mid-afternoon. That's the time when you'll be ready to talk about your next step.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
You're now in a charming phase. Surprised? You may not be, but some of your associates certainly will be. Yet the dominant planet in your life is no longer abrasive Mars but gentle Venus. That's why it's time for friendly co-operation rather than fierce confrontation.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
You thought you had made your mind up, but what takes place today will make you think again, probably regarding joint financial commitments. An extravagant offer, on the other hand, will provide a valuable boost to your morale and set you up for the future.

LEO (July 24 - Aug. 23)
Jupiter is fighting a celestial battle with Saturn, but Venus is about to mediate between these two warring forces. The benefits will arrive very soon when a close ally, perhaps a woman, intercedes with someone who has been trying to hold you back.

VIRGO (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23)
Why don't you spare a little time for dealing with travel plans. Holiday arrangements may be finalised and all overseas contacts should be assiduously cultivated: you could well be taking a journey for business rather than just pleasure. Also, keep an eye open for legal complications this afternoon.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23)
The whole point about your current stars is revealed by Mercury's odd behaviour: other people, mainly close partners, will be acting erratically and will change their minds without warning. You must cultivate tolerance and flexibility - and keep the peace.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)
You are far too bright to be taken in by people who are telling you what you can or can't do at home or in your private life. If you know what's best, you will form alliances with partners who will back you to the hilt: there's no point in hanging around with people who don't care.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 - Dec. 22)
Sometimes good fortune comes in strange forms, and you should be content if the day brings more than your fair share of responsibilities. The more you accomplish over the next forty-eight hours, the better able you will be to appreciate social developments after then.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 23 - Jan. 20)
Those revolutionary and inspired planets, Uranus and Neptune, are behaving like a couple of synchronised swimmers, ducking and diving through your chart. Behind every apparently trivial event this week will lie a deeper purpose as your destiny unfolds.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)
Your innate resistance to change is strong and growing stronger. There is nothing wrong with this. In fact, if romance, pleasure or self-indulgence are among your goals, you may do very well indeed. Only in the most practical of family matters may flexibility be necessary.

PISCES (Feb. 20 - Mar 20)
The key to a successful life is good communication. This morning you may be obliged to exaggerate a little, but this afternoon you should stick to the facts. Watch for similar inconsistencies in partners' words for, surprisingly, they may not actually mean what they say.

Solutions to Saturday's puzzle

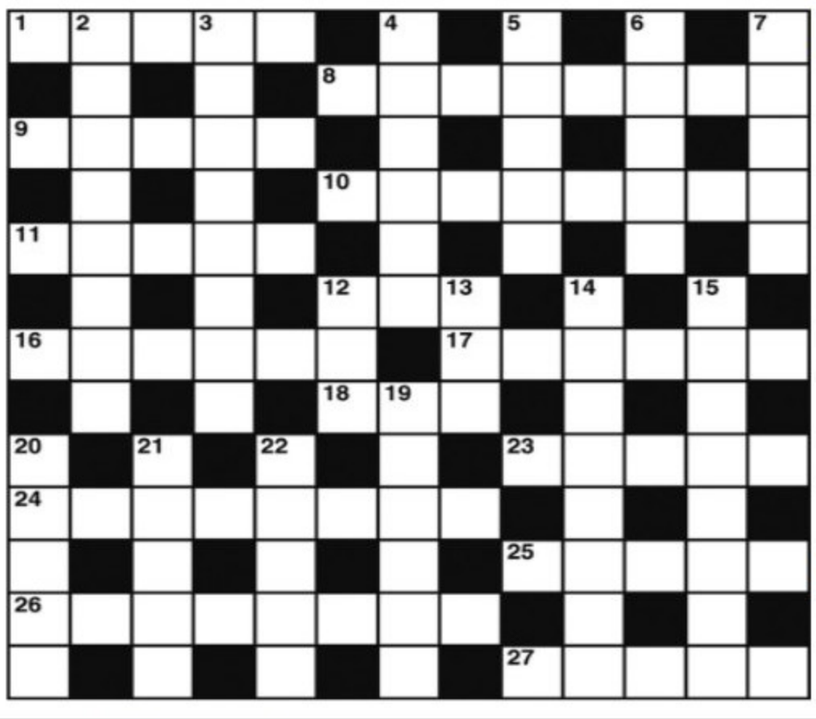
		6	2					4
	7		1					
			4	8	6			1
7						9	6	
		1				8		
	6	2						7
9			8	6	3			
					4		9	
8					1	4		

6	4	5	2	7	9	1	3	8
7	3	9	6	1	8	5	2	4
8	1	2	5	3	4	7	9	6
4	7	6	1	5	3	2	8	9
2	8	1	7	9	6	4	5	3
9	5	3	4	8	2	6	1	7
1	9	4	8	6	5	3	7	2
5	2	8	3	4	7	9	6	1
3	6	7	9	2	1	8	4	5

SUDOKU HARD

TEST YOUR NUMBER CRUNCHING SKILL WITH OUR UNIQUE PUZZLE

Fill in the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3X3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



CROSS WORD

ACROSS
1 King of an unruly horde (5)
8 Seat of unusual charm and appearance (8)
9 Leaves with all debts settled (5)
10 Contracting to record some Wagnerian operas (8)
11 Moving stair perhaps (5)
12 Noah's son is no great actor (3)
16 One girl to argue with another (6)
17 No way out around the centre at least (6)
18 Small container carried in trucks across country (3)
23 Post office workers (5)
24 How a bright idea comes to you? (2,1,5)
25 Pain that makes any go wild (5)
26 Same loss made from dark syrup (8)
27 Quiet remark possibly said by sweetheart (5)

DOWN
2 One slum I refurbish - with this paint? (8)
3 Stranger dismissed - rides off (8)
4 Mistakes upset a sailor in time (6)
5 Direction to all hands to get the ship moving? (5)
6 Piper in command of terrified flight (5)
7 Fasteners for jumpers (5)
12 Is obliged to take part in the chase (3)
13 Scottish mother figure (3)
14 How slowly one travelled in olden days (2,6)
15 Swindle made to pay - within limits (8)
19 Possibly unseat Jane (6)
20 Companies supply wood and paper for publication (5)
21 A girl's jocular retort (5)
22 Extra hard material (5)

SATURDAY'S SOLUTIONS

Across: 1 Filibuster, 6 Muff, 10 Robes, 11 Short note, 12 Humanity, 13 Acted, 15 Unicorn, 17 Scherzo, 19 Roguish, 21 Resites, 22 Eaves, 24 Resident, 27 Dishonour, 28 Naive, 29 Yard, 30 Determined.

Down: 1 Fare, 2 Labouring, 3 Basra, 4 Session, 5 Eponyms, 7 U-boat, 8 Fieldmouse, 9 Attaches, 14 Quarterday, 16 Omission, 18 Retention, 20 Hormone, 21 Reserve, 23 Visor, 25 Denim, 26 Tend.

JUMBLE

UNSCRAMBLE THESE JUMBLES, ONE LETTER TO EACH SQUARE, TO FORM FOUR ORDINARY WORDS.

BY DAVID L. HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK

ICTHH

SEQTU

TRLEET

GOLONA

SOME OF THE PEOPLE VIEWING RODIN'S SCULPTURE "THE THINKER" WERE ---
Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: GOING TINGE DETACH FIASCO
Answer: The most-charming, handsomest canine at the park was a — FETCHING DOG

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Davanagere MP Dr Prabha Mallikarjun has been elected unopposed as the member of the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences (NIMHANS) Bangalore. In connection with the election of two members of Lok Sabha to NIMHANS, Bangalore (motion in respect of which was adopted by the House on November 29), four nominations were received upto the date and time fixed for the purpose

USB CHARGER SCAM

Charging phone at public places? Think twice!

USB ports used for charging, data transfer

TIPS TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM USB PORT SCAM

- Avoid using public charging stations or portable wall chargers
- Use an electrical wall outlet for charging
- Carry and use only your personal charging cables
- Use software security measures to lock your phone, ensuring that it can't pair with a connected device.
- Install antivirus apps to protect your devices from malware. (Installing antivirus software can help alert you to potential attacks on your smart devices, such as phones, laptops & TVs)
- Disable Bluetooth by default when you charge
- Update USB drivers
- Keep your phone or device updated with latest patches
- Restrict software installation on your device with strong password
- Check whether charging stations have data or network cable connected in the background which are not required
- Trust only authorised charging points, not by any third party. Hackers may use fake logo to dupe others

RAKSHITH GOWDA @ Bengaluru

IN a concerning trend, cyber criminals are now targeting public mobile phone charging stations to steal users' sensitive data, cyber security experts warn. The growing threat involves the use of USB charging ports, commonly found in public places such as airports, bus stands, railway stations, cafes and hotels. USB ports are often used for both power and data transfer, creating an opportunity for hackers to exploit.

Even the state police are creating awareness on the USB charger scam, cautioning people against using public phone charging stations.

Dr Harsha, a cyber security expert, said that if public USB charging stations are not configured properly, cyber criminals can misuse the ports to steal data. Since most charging stations use USB ports and the charging cables as a two-way street -- to send the power to device and also transfer data – cyber criminals have more opportunities to steal data. The scam is all about stealing data or leaving malware in devices. If a person's mobile phone battery is low, he or she does not think of security as he/she just wants to charge the defice. Frauds take this as an advantage, he said.

Cyber criminals try to steal data in two main ways. First, when a device is plugged into a public USB port, a hacker can compromise that port to infect the device. This could lead to the theft of data such as financial information, passwords, banking details and personal files, which can result in identity theft or financial loss. The hacker can use a crawler program to search for sensitive data on the device. Secondly, cyber criminals may use USB ports to install malware or viruses on devices. These malicious programs can clone phone data and transfer it to the hacker's device, he said.

Hackers may infect USB ports or charging cables in public areas before users connect their devices. Both Android and iOS devices, especially older generation phones, are particularly vulnerable to such attacks, he warned.

CHRISTMASY FEEL

Decorative paraphernalia on sale for Christmas at a shop on Avenue Road in Bengaluru on Sunday | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

Man impersonates Upalokayukta, held

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

THE Anekal police arrested a man, who claimed to work in the Karnataka Lokayukta and misused the name of Upalokayukta Justice B. Veerappa on a caller ID application. The accused tried to threaten the deputy tahsildar of Anekal to complete a work by misusing the Upalokayukta's name.

The accused has been identified as Anand Kumar, a native of Kolar. The police said that Kumar met the Deputy Tahsildar of Anekal, Kariya Naik, claiming he was employed in the Karnataka Lokayukta office in Bengaluru and was a relative of Upalokayukta Justice B. Veerappa. He requested Naik to change the name of the owner of a one acre land in Sarjapur to his brother's name, though the land belonged to some other person.

When Naik ignored his request, Kumar approached him again and handed him a phone, claiming that a senior police officer with the Lokayukta was on line. The person on the other end also pretended to be a Lokayukta official. Kumar allegedly threatened and harassed Naik, pressuring him to complete the work without delay. He also saved his number as "Upalokayukta B Veerappa" on a caller ID application and used the number to contact Naik.

Suspicious of Kumar's claims, Naik shared his number and photo with Lokayukta officials. Upon verification, the officials confirmed that Kumar was not associated with the Lokayukta, following which Naik filed a complaint with the police. Following the complaint, the police arrested Kumar and are conducting further investigations into the matter.

IIT MADRAS

3D high-res images of the human fetal brain released

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

UNDERSTANDING the brain from the cellular level onward is crucial for addressing developmental disorders like learning disabilities and autism. The research on this is key to unlocking better solutions for early intervention and improving outcomes for affected children, Professor Mohanasankar Sivaprakasam, Head of the Sudha Gopalakrishnan Brain Centre, IIT Madras, said.

Speaking at a panel discussion at the Science Gallery on Sunday, he explained that India's large share of the world's annual births—around 25 million—makes it vital to study brain development from the fetal stage through adolescence. His remarks followed with the release of the 'most detailed' 3D high-resolution images of the human fetal brain by IIT Madras, providing insights into its complex development.

As part of the research, for the first time globally, 5,132 brain sections were digitally imaged at a cellular level using advanced brain mapping technology.

The dataset, named 'Dharani' is now available as an open-source resource at the institute's website.

The findings of this research will be published as a special issue in the Journal of Comparative Neurology, a renowned peer-reviewed journal in the field of neuroscience.

Hotels association demand safety from rising attacks

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

AFTER a bakery owner near KRS reservoir in Mandya was attacked fatally, Karnataka State Hotels Association raised concern regarding the rising incidents of assaults, homicides, extortion and various other criminal activities targeting hotel and bakery business owners, especially in rural areas.

President of the Association G K Shetty, called upon the state government and the police department to implement stringent measures without delay to avert them.

He cautioned that widespread protests across the state would ensue if the assaults on hoteliers persist.

In a press release on Sunday, he stated that the recent event involving a group of assailants who fatally stabbed a bakery owner, Chetan, with deadly weapons near KRS Police Station, a well-known tourist attraction in Mandya district, has instilled a sense of fear among hotel proprietors.

"Proprietors of hotels and bakeries are increasingly falling prey to extortion through hafta collection. Those who refuse to comply face physical violence and threats to their lives. Such heinous acts, including murder, are fostering a climate of fear among these business owners," Shetty said.

"Our efforts significantly bolster the national economy through the promotion of tourism and the creation of local employment opportunities. Nevertheless, it is disheartening to note that their personal safety remains unprotected," he said.

He submitted a memorandum to the Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara urging safety of hotel and bakery owners and to provide assistance to the bakery entrepreneur who had fallen victim to the crime.

CRIME PATROL

WOMAN THROWS TWO-MONTH-OLD BABY INTO LAKE IN BELAGAVI, RESCUED

Belagavi: A two-month-old baby boy was thrown into the lake allegedly by his mother, Shantha (35) in Kanabargi lake in Belagavi on Sunday. The infant was rescued in time and is currently undergoing treatment. Medical reports confirm that the baby is safe and recovering. Preliminary investigations revealed that Shantha took the extreme step because the baby was frequently suffering from seizures and epilepsy. The psychological strain and helplessness surrounding her child's health seemed to have driven her to take the extreme step, sources said. Authorities acted swiftly after being alerted, rescuing the child and ensuring his safety. Shantha has been detained, and an FIR was filed at Malmaruti police station. Investigations are going on to uncover further details.

CITY UNION BANK LIMITED
Credit Recovery and Management Department
Administrative Office: No.24-B, Gandhi Nagar, Kumbakonam - 612001. E-Mail id: crmd@cityunionbank.in, Phone: 0435-2432322, Fax: 0435-2431746

RE-TENDER-CUM-AUCTION SALE NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT 2002

The following property/ies mortgaged to **City Union Bank Limited** will be sold in Re-Tender-cum-Public Auction by the Authorised Officer of the Bank, under Rule 8 (6) & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, under the SARFAESI Act, 2002, for recovery of a sum of **Rs.1,85,35,751/- (Rupees One Crore Eighty Five Lakh Thirty Five Thousand Seven Hundred and Fifty One only)** as on **12-11-2024** together with further interest to be charged from **13-11-2024** onwards and other expenses, any other dues to the Bank by the borrowers / guarantors **No.1) M/s. H M S Silk Industries, No.52, Melekote, Rehmaniya Nagar, Kanakapura - 562117. Also at, M/s. H M S Silk Industries, Sy. No. 221, Aralasandra Village, Kanakapura, Ramanagara - 562117. No.2) Mr. Majeed Shariff, S/o. Mohammed Shariff, Ward No. 12, Melekote, Near Urdu School, Kanakapura - 562117. No.3) Mrs. Majira Banu, W/o. Majeed Shariff, Ward No.12, Melekote, Near Urdu School, Kanakapura - 562117 No.4) M/s. MMS Silk Industry, No.236, Hannur Belathuru Village, Kollegala, Ramanagara, Karnataka - 571440.**

Immovable Properties Mortgaged to our Bank

Schedule - A : (Property Owned by Mrs. Majira Banu, W/o. Majeed Shariff)

All that piece and parcel of Residential Property bearing Municipal Katha No. 8678/7383/A, PID No. 36-532-551, Measuring : East to West 15.240030 Meters and North to South 18.288037, situated at Ward No. 13, A. K. Colony, Melekote, Kanakapura Town, Kanakapura Taluk, Ramanagara District. Bounded on : East by : Road, West by : House of Puttaswami, North by : Road , South by : House of Chikkavenkataiah.

Reserve Price : Rs.65,00,000/-
(Rupees Sixty Five Lakh only)

Schedule - B : (Property Owned by Mr. Majeed Shariff, S/o. Mohammed Shariff)

All that piece and parcel of the RCC Ground Floor, Commercial-cum-Residential Property bearing Old Municipal Khatha No. 5471/3667A Measuring : East to West 50 feet and North to South 54 feet together with 2700.00 sq. ft. situated at Rehmaniya Nagar, Melekote, Ward No. 12, Kanakapura. Bounded on : East by : Municipal Road, West by : House of Fayaz, North by : House of Fazil, South by : Municipal Road.

Reserve Price : Rs.80,00,000/-
(Rupees Eighty Lakh only)

RE-AUCTION DETAILS

Date of Re-Tender-cum-Auction Sale	Venue
03-01-2025	City Union Bank Limited, Bengaluru-Ramanagara Branch, B.M.Road, 316, I Stage, Near Bus Stand, Bengaluru-Mysore Main Road, Ramanagara, Bengaluru Rural - 571511. Telephone No.080-27276688, Cell No.9379511195.

Terms and Conditions of Re-Tender-cum-Auction Sale :

(1) The intending bidders should be present in person for the auction and participate personally and give a declaration in writing to the effect that he/she is bidding for himself/herself. (2) The intending bidders may obtain the Tender Forms from **The Manager, City Union Bank Limited, Bengaluru-Ramanagara Branch, B.M.Road, 316, I Stage, Near Bus Stand, Bengaluru - Mysore Main Road, Ramanagara, Bengaluru Rural - 571511.** (3) The intending bidders should submit their bids only in the Tender Form prescribed in sealed envelopes addressed to **The Authorised Officer, City Union Bank Ltd.,** together with a Pay Order / Demand Draft for an EMD of **10%** of the Reserve Price, drawn in favour of **"City Union Bank Ltd.", on or before 12.00 Noon** on the date of Tender-cum-Auction Sale hereby notified. (4) For inspection of the property and other particulars, the intending purchaser may contact **Telephone No.080-27276688, Cell No.9379511195.** (5) The property/ ies are sold on "As-is-where-is", "As-is-what-is" and "whatever-there is" basis. (6) The sealed tenders will be opened in the presence of the intending bidders at **01.00 p.m.** on the date of Tender-cum-Auction Sale hereby notified. Though in general the sale will be by way of closed tenders, the Authorised Officer may, at his sole discretion, conduct an Open Auction among the interested bidders who desire to quote a bid higher than the one received in the closed tender process, and in such an event, the sale shall be conferred on the person making highest bid. The sale, however, is subject to confirmation of City Union Bank Limited. (7) The successful bidder shall have to pay **25% (inclusive of EMD paid)** of the Sale amount **immediately** on completion of sale and the balance amount of **75%** within **15 days** from the date of confirmation of sale, failing which the initial deposit of **25%** shall be forfeited. (8) The Sale Certificate will be issued by the Authorised Officer in favour of the successful purchaser only after receipt of the entire sale consideration within the time limit stipulated herein. (9) The successful purchaser shall bear the charges/fees payable for conveyance, such as stamp duty, registration fee etc., as applicable under law. (10) The successful bidder should pay the statutory dues (lawful house tax, electricity charges and other dues), TDS, GST if any, due to Government, Government Undertaking and local bodies. (11) The Authorised Officer shall have all the powers to accept or reject the bids or postpone or cancel the sale without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Place : Kumbakonam, Date : 13-12-2024 — Authorised Officer

Regd. Office: 149, T.S.R. (Big) Street, Kumbakonam, Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu - 612001, CIN - L65110TN1904PLC001287, Telephone No.0435-2402322, Fax: 0435-2431746, Website: www.cityunionbank.com

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PUBLIC NOTICE

I the undersigned advocate on behalf of my client **Smt. Ashwathalakshmi. V D/o Late. Vinodkumar, W/o Pramodkumar,** aged about 26 years, R/at: Channasandra village, Vemagal Hobli, Kolar Taluk, Kolar District have filed the above petition for the death certificate of one **Late. Vinodkumar S/o. Late G. Channappa who died on 15.11.1995** at Avathi village, Kasaba Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District. If any parties/who have objections may dispute regarding the same can appear before the Hon'ble Prl Civil Judge and JMFC at Devanahalli and the date of hearing **on 17.01.2025 at 11.00 A.M.in Crl.Mis No.480/2024**

By Order of the Court, Sd/- Chief Ministerial Officer
Civil Judge & JMFC Court, Devanahalli
H.V. Radhamani, Advocate

CITY UNION BANK LIMITED
Credit Recovery and Management Department
Administrative Office : No. 24-B, Gandhi Nagar, Kumbakonam - 612 001. E-Mail id : crmd@cityunionbank.in, Ph : 0435-2432322, Fax : 0435-2431746

RE-TENDER-CUM-AUCTION SALE NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT 2002

The following property/ies mortgaged to **City Union Bank Limited** will be sold in Re-Tender-cum Public Auction by the Authorised Officer of the Bank, under Rule 8 (6) & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, under the SARFAESI Act, 2002, for recovery of a sum of **Rs.27,45,012/- (Rupees Twenty Seven Lakh Forty Five Thousand and Twelve only)** as on **10-11-2024** together with further interest to be charged from **11-11-2024** onwards and other expenses, any other dues to the Bank by the borrowers / guarantors **No.1) M/s. S.V. Silks, No.85/3703, Ganigarapete, Doddaballapur, Karnataka - 561203. No.2) Mr. Vishwanath, S/o. Shivanna, D.No.3790, 28th Ward, Taluk Office Road, Deshadapete, Behind Old SRM, Doddaballapur - 561203. No.3) Mrs. Kanyakumari CP, W/o. Vishwanath, D.No.3790, 28th Ward, Taluk Office Road, Deshadapete, Behind Old SRM, Doddaballapur - 561203.**

Immovable Property Mortgaged to our Bank

Schedule - A : (Property Owned by Mr. Vishwanath, S/o. Shivanna)

Property Situated at 4th Ward, Deshadapete, Doddaballapur - 561203, Old Khata No.2461, Present Khata No.85/79/3697/1, Present Khata SL No.350, measuring : East-West 8 feet and North-South 45 feet, Bounded by : East : Property of Item No.2, West : Properties of Channabasavaradya & Jayanna, North : Compound of Masjid, South : Road.

Schedule - B : (Property Owned by Mr. Vishwanath, S/o. Shivanna)

Property Situated at 4th Ward, Deshadapete, Doddaballapur - 561203, Old Khata No.2459, Present Khata No.80/75/3694/1, Present Khata SL No.349, measuring : East-West 22 feet and North-South 33 feet, Bounded by : East : Properties of Gajendra, Veerabhadraradya & Others West : Property of Item No.1, North : Property of Item No.3, South : Road.

Schedule - C : (Property Owned by Mr. Vishwanath, S/o. Shivanna)

Property Situated at 4th Ward, Deshadapete, Doddaballapur - 561203, Old Khata No.3694/3695/3697/3698/2, Present Khata No.77/74/3694, Present Khata SL No.348, measuring : East-West 15 feet and North-South 15 feet, Bounded by : East : Properties of Jayanna & others, West : Property of Item No.1, North : Compound of Masjid, South : Property of Item No.2. Total Extent of Land 1,311 Sq.Ft. RCC Ground Floor & First Floor Residential Building constructed therein.

Reserve Price : Rs. 21,00,000/-
(Rupees Twenty One Lakh only) (For Schedule A, B and C)

RE-AUCTION DETAILS

Date of Re-Tender-cum-Auction Sale	Venue
02-01-2025	City Union Bank Limited, Doddaballapur Branch, 1108/1116/925, Hungi Complex, Cinema Street, Doddaballapur, Bengaluru Urban, Karnataka - 561203. Telephone No.080-27622082, Cell No.9341673937.

Terms and Conditions of Re-Tender-cum-Auction Sale :

(1) The intending bidders should be present in person for the auction and participate personally and give a declaration in writing to the effect that he/she is bidding for himself / herself. (2) The intending bidders may obtain the Tender Forms from **The Manager, City Union Bank Limited, Doddaballapur Branch, 1108/1116/925, Hungi Complex, Cinema Street, Doddaballapur, Bengaluru Urban, Karnataka - 561203.** (3) The intending bidders should submit their bids only in the Tender Form prescribed in sealed envelopes addressed to **The Authorised Officer, City Union Bank Ltd.,** together with a Pay Order / Demand Draft for an EMD of **10%** of the Reserve Price, drawn in favour of **"City Union Bank Ltd.", on or before 12.00 Noon** on the date of Tender-cum-Auction Sale hereby notified. (4) For inspection of the property and other particulars, the intending purchaser may contact **Telephone No:080-27622082, Cell No :9341673937.** (5) The property/ies are sold on "As-is-where-is", "As-is-what-is" and "whatever-there is" basis. (6) The sealed tenders will be opened in the presence of the intending bidders at **01.00 p.m.** on the date of Tender-cum-Auction Sale hereby notified. Though in general the sale will be by way of closed tenders, the Authorised Officer may, at his sole discretion, conduct an Open Auction among the interested bidders who desire to quote a bid higher than the one received in the closed tender process, and in such an event, the sale shall be conferred on the person making highest bid. The sale, however, is subject to confirmation of City Union Bank Limited. (7) The successful bidder shall have to pay **25% (inclusive of EMD paid)** of the sale amount **immediately** on completion of sale and the balance amount of **75%** within **15 days** from the date of confirmation of sale, failing which the initial deposit of **25%** shall be forfeited. (8) The Sale Certificate will be issued by the Authorised Officer in favour of the successful purchaser only after receipt of the entire sale consideration within the time limit stipulated herein. (9) The successful purchaser shall bear the charges/fees payable for conveyance, such as stamp duty, registration fee etc., as applicable under law. (10) The successful bidder should pay the statutory dues (lawful house tax, electricity charges and other dues), TDS, GST if any, due to Government, Government Undertaking and local bodies. (11) The Authorised Officer shall have all the powers to accept or reject the bids or postpone or cancel the sale without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Place : Kumbakonam, Date : 13-12-2024 — Authorised Officer

Regd. Office : 149, T.S.R. (Big) Street, Kumbakonam, Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu - 612 001, CIN - L65110TN1904PLC001287, Telephone No. 0435-2402322, Fax : 0435-2431746, Website : www.cityunionbank.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

The notice is hereby given to public that our client G.Madhu intending to mortgage the property and avail loan with Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited.

If any person or persons or financial institution or Bank has any claim over the schedule property or any person or persons claim any right, title or interest, over the schedule property, the same may be lodged with the undersigned within seven days from today, along with relevant documents, failing which it will be presumed that the schedule property is free from any such claim and any claim received thereafter will not bind my client and would not be considered by my client.

SCHEDULE :

All that piece and parcel of property bearing Southern portion of site no.103, formed in property no.65, Khatha no.275/15/103, Situated at Kowdenahalli @ Ramamurthy Nagar, Krishnarajapura Hobli, erstwhile Bangalore South Taluk, now Bangalore East Taluk, now comes under the limits of BBMP, Bangalore, Measuring East to West: on the Northern Side 40 feet and On the Southern Side 40 feet and North to South: on the Eastern Side 15 feet and on the Western Side 0 Feet , in all measuring 300 sq.ft., and bounded on the: East By –Road, West by, Site No.104, North by- remaining portion of same site No.103, South By –Road.

V.L. Associates
Advocates
No.56, Out house, 19th Main Road, 2nd Block, Rajajinagar, Bangalore-560 010.
Ph: 9481900851/ 9743323668.
Place: Bangalore Date: 14.12.2024

BEFORE THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL (DRT-I) AT BENGALURU
B.S.N.L. Building, 4th Floor, Raj Bhavan Road, Bengaluru-560 001.

O.A. No. 1651/2023

Between : Bank of Baroda, Dr. Rajkumar Road (E-Rajajinagar) Branch, Bangalore-560010. ...Applicant
AND : Mrs. Pavithra Patil ...Defendant

SUMMONS ISSUED UNDER RULE-23(viii) OF THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL PROCEDURE RULES-1993

Defendant : Mrs. Pavithra Patil,
W/o Mr. M. J. Tejaswi, aged about 29 years, Residing at "Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Nilaya" Someshwara Extension, Ward No.4, Doddaballapura-561 023, Bangalore Rural District.

SUMMONS TO DEFENDANT BY WAY OF PAPER PUBLICATION

Whereas the applicant has instituted an Application Under Section 19 of the Recovery of Debts and Bankruptcy Ac-1993 against the defendants / you for the recovery of a sum of Rs.21,41,810/- (Rupees Twenty one Lakhs Forty one thousand Eight Hundred and Ten Only) together with current and future interest and other reliefs.

The above mentioned defendants are therefore hereby directed to appear before this Tribunal in person or through an Advocate or duly authorized agent, in support of their defence to show cause within 30 days from the date of Publication or **on 13-03-2025 at 10.30 A.M.** as to why the reliefs prayed for should not be granted.

Take notice that in case of default the application will be heard and determined in your absence.

Given under my hand and the Seal of this Tribunal on the 3rd day of November 2024.

By Order of the Tribunal, Registrar, Debts Recovery Tribunal-I, Bangalore-560 001.
RAGHAVENDRA RAO MANVI, Advocate

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank
(A Government of India Undertaking)

Singasandra Branch
37/1, Hosur Main Road, Singasandra, Singasandra B.O- 560068, Mobile No. 9141421159, E-mail: cb4785@canarabank.com

(Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Property)

SALE NOTICE

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of immovable / movable Property under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/physical (Strike whichever is not applicable)possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of **Singasandra Branch** of the **Canara Bank,** will be sold on **"As is where is", "As is what is", and " Whatever there is"** on **31.12.2024 & 10.30 A.M. to 11.30 A.M.,** for recovery of below mentioned amount.

E-AUCTION DATE: 31.12.2024

Borrower(s): (1) Mr. Sri Lakshmi Jeweller, # 83, 3rd Cross, Vidya Nagar, Bommasandra, Bangalore, Karnataka-560099. **(2) Mr. Jagdish M G.** S/o M S Ganesh, 18-19/26, Lakshmi Nilayam, 1st Main, 2nd Cross, Balaji Nagar, D R Post, S G Palya, Bangalore, Karnataka, India-560029.

Total liabilities: Rs.66,42,596.95 (Rupees Sixty Six Lakh Forty Two Thousand Five Hundred Ninety Six And Paise Ninety Five Only) as on **12.12.2024** along with costs, expenses and future interest there on.

Reserve Price: Rs.93,88,000/-. EMD: Rs.9,38,800/-.

Earnest Money Deposit shall be deposited on or before: **30.12.2024 at 4.00 PM.**

Description of the immovable Property :

Name of the Title Holder: Mr. M S Jagadish S/o M S Ganesh

Residential property bearing Muncipal New No.26. Old No.18/19, previous corporation No.18-26 of BBMP ward No. 152, Sudgunte Palya, Old ward No. 63 , Lakkasandra, situated at 2nd cross Balaji Nagar, DRC Post, Bangalore-560029 measuring East to West 30 feet and North to South 40 Feet Total area 1200 Sq. Ft. along with 16 squares built up area with all right of easements appurtenances either latest patent attached to the schedule property bounded as follows: North : By Road, South : By Private Property, East : Property 18-19/26, West : Property No. 17.

Known encumbrances, if any: Not to the knowledge of the Bank. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer the link "E-Auction" provided in **Canara Bank's website (www.canarabank.com) or may contact Authorised Officer, M/s PSB Alliance (Ebkray) Mobile: 9832952602, E-mail id: support.baanknet@psballiance.com/, Support & Backup Office: Support Team, Contact No.Mobile: 82912 20220.**

Date : 15.12.2024 — **Sd/- Authorised Officer**
Place: Bengaluru — **Canara Bank**

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POSSESSION NOTICE

WHEREAS

The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Bharat Co-operative Bank (Mumbai) Ltd., under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notice dated 23.09.2024 calling upon the Principal Borrower **M/s.Metro Security and Allied Services,** Business address at No.14, 2nd Floor, Srini Towers, Near Basavanapura Govt Primary School, Off Basavanapura Road, Bangalore-560036 and Partners & Joint/Co Borrowers, **Mr.P.Krishnaiah, S/o.Kuppayya Shetty and Mrs. P.Hemavathi, W/o.P.Krishnaiah** both R/a No.69, Manjunatha Nilaya, Nethravathi Layout, Jai Bharat Road, K R Puram, Bangalore-560036 to repay the amount mentioned in the Demand Notice being **Rs.26,12,739/- (Rupees Twenty Six Lakh Twelve Thousand Seven Hundred and Thirty Nine)** outstanding as on 31.08.2024 under Cash Credit Limit A/c No.002313100000288 alongwith further interest & other charges respectively within 60 days from the date of the receipt of the said notice.

The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers in particular and the public in general that the undersigned has taken the Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub section (4) of section 13 of the said Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 on this 11th day of December 2024.

The Borrowers in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the said Property and any dealings with the said Property shall be subject to the charge of Bharat Co-Operative Bank (Mumbai) Ltd, for an amount as mentioned above alongwith further interest & other charges respectively, less amount paid thereafter if any.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8)of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of Eastern portion of property bearing **Site No.69,** Old I.T.I NA Katha No.680/56/1, situated at **Nethravathi Layout, Jai Bharath Road, K R Puram Village, K R Puram Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk** measuring East to West measuring 20 feet & North to South measuring 28 feet totally measuring **560 sq. feet** along with building constructed thereon owned by **Mr.P. Krishnaiah** and bounded by :

East : Site No.68 belongs to G.Doraiwamy.
West : Remaining portion of Site No.69
North : Road
South : Private Property

Place : Bangalore
Date : 11.12.2024

Sd/- **Chief Manager & Authorised Officer, Bharat Co-operative Bank (Mumbai) Ltd.**

'NEED GOKAK-LIKE AGITATION TO SAVE GOVT SCHOOLS'

P.C.: ALLEN EG ENUSE J.

KANNADA, one of the oldest languages in the world which has the highest number of Jnanpith awardees after Hindi, has evolved over time. But has it adapted to the new challenges? Several issues, from Kannada-medium schools to job reservation for Kannadigas, to the fight between Kannadigas and non-Kannadigas, especially in Bengaluru, often become the topic of discussion. In a conversation with the editorial team of *TNIE*, Kannada Development Authority (KDA) Chairman **Purushottama Bilimale** speaks on various issues related to the language and its development. Excerpts.

What is the purpose of the Kannada Development Authority's Delhi visit?
Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had clearly said local people should be recruited for the front desk in banks, but it is not happening. We are approaching her with data, and urging her to take action against such banks. We are also meeting Jawaharlal Nehru University authorities on a Kannada study chairperson not being appointed for the past three years. When I was heading this Chair, we had translated Ranna's Gadhayudhum and also Vaddaraadhane to English. These books were printed by Routledge publishers. Even Kavirajamarga has been translated to English. If Kannada classics are translated to English, they have readers worldwide. We are also meeting Karnataka MPs to tell them how Karnataka's representation at the Centre is weak. There is no politics. Karnataka is not able to utilise at least 40 per cent of the Centre's budget allocated to Karnataka. Our MPs are weak in terms of representing our issues, and focus more on party issues.

What is the status of 'classical status' given to Kannada?
Kannada got classical status in 2008. Till date, we are not able to get a classical centre for the state, whereas Tamil got classical status in 2004 and got a centre in 2007. We were not able to get it because there are certain guidelines of the Central government which Karnataka is not able to implement. There was confusion and conflict on the location where they wanted to start it, and 14 years were wasted in this process. The Central government was also reluctant initially. Recently, many languages, including Pali, Prakrit, Assamese, Bengali and Marathi were declared as 'classical'. We have no clarity whether the Centre wants to give this to the respective states. I want to meet the minister concerned for some clarity. Instead of writing letters, we need to meet officers and ministers directly to find solutions.

What do you have to say about government schools?
In 2023-24, the number of students who joined English medium schools was over 5 lakh, and the number who joined Kannada medium schools was around 3 lakh. Around 45,000 schools are in bad state. At least 60 per cent of Kannadigas want their children to study in English medium schools. We have to start afresh to address this issue. We need to initiate a 'Save Kannada Schools' agitation, similar to the Gokak agitation for first-language status for Kannada in Karnataka. We need to call for support for this agitation from Bidar to Chamarajanagara. At the time, there was a big group in the state that said no to Kannada. Kannada is slowly going away from school education. Recently, English medium education was started in 1,439 schools and all the children in Kannada medium shifted to English medium. English schools have existed since 1836. Nowhere in the world have I seen primary education in a foreign language, by sacrificing the mother tongue. We are almost 50 years behind in the way we teach Kannada. We don't use technology. There are 60 printed grammar books in Kannada and all these are based on 12th century Keshiraja's Shabdamanidarpana which again was written based on Sanskrit grammar. Kannada is a living language. It has not remained as a textual language. There are differences in writing grammar using textual language and a living language. There is not one Kannada grammar book that has been written using living language.

EXPRESS Dialogues

What are the reasons for certain groups opposing Kannada?
They say Kannada is an exploitation language, and is spoken only in rural areas and among Dalits. People in urban areas don't speak or learn Kannada. They point out that city people learn English and take up good jobs, and those who learn Kannada stay back in their home towns. This needs to be debated and discussed. Writers, media, experts and conventions like Kannada Sahitya Sammelana, all of us are failing to convince people about education in the mother tongue.

In social media, friction is being highlighted on a huge scale. How can we come out of this?
Language fanaticism is easy. There is a notion that if anybody who talks about language or fights for Kannada gets an identity. We have to rule out language fanatics. Population growth is not the same in entire India. Karnataka's population growth is 3.7 per cent, whereas in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, population growth is much higher. If facilities and jobs are not provided in states where population is increasing rapidly, they will definitely move towards states which have low population growth.

Some are demanding that the government send back migrants from Karnataka...
It is common for people from heavily populated states to move to low population states like Karnataka. Sending migrants back to their states is easier said than done. The fact that migrants are taking up many necessary jobs in Karnataka should be accepted. There are lakhs of Northeastern and Bihari migrants working in the hotel and other industries. If they are sent back, do we have enough people here to fill in for them? The non-availability of Kannadigas for hire is one reason why businessmen don't give opportunities for locals, they prefer migrants for reasons like cheap labour, their availability to work round the clock and that migrants don't take leave often, like locals who go on leave for every festival and death in the family. We cannot prevent migration as per the Constitution, as we are quasi-federal. Migration is not restricted to Karnataka alone but is a global phenomenon.

A law was made reserving jobs for Kannadigas in the private sector. But it was withdrawn...
Yes, the law was put on hold within a few hours after it was approved. The law was passed in a hurried manner. Before passing such orders, wide discussions should have been held with multinational companies, thinkers, and others involved. The government should have convinced the companies that they were being provided land and water and they should reserve 30-40 per cent of the jobs for locals. We should have convinced the companies on this.

So what should the government do now?
We cannot enforce a law to prohibit migration. Instead of conversing in the languages of non-Kannadigas which is being done now, we have to converse in Kannada, so that they learn the language and know about local culture and respect it. KDA has set up Kannada learning centres in over 35 places, which include companies, hospitals, colleges and banks where over 1,800 non-Kannadigas are taught Kannada. The government is also using Kannada prominently in its administration. It approved the mandatory 60 per cent Kannada language rule on boards, where the remaining 40 per cent is reserved for other languages. Kannada Language Comprehensive Development (Amendment) Act, 2024, is a welcome move. We have also written to food delivery aggregators Zomato and Swiggy to ensure that their staff knows basic Kannada. We have also requested doctors to write prescriptions in Kannada.

Are there technical terms in Kannada? Do we have books for the same?
Yes, there are.

What about the struggle of Kannada organisations and demand for jobs for Kannadigas in the private sector?
Kannada organisations have done a lot of work in the early 80s. After I became KDA chairman, I called about 60 organisations and sought their suggestions to improve Kannada in the state. Members of organisations in the 21st century have no clarity on the subject. For the development of Kannada, pro-Kannada organisations should come up with new thinking. Many organisations demand implementation of the Sarojini Mahishi Commission report, but many of the recommendations are outdated.

To give a push for Kannada, there should be a push from the entire government machinery and not by one organisation or a few individuals...
If our universities create bright and good competitors, why would companies not be interested in hiring? They don't see you in terms of your language, they see your talent and skills. The university should be good. If Kannada has to survive and grow, we need to address this issue.

What should be done to ensure Kannada Sahitya Sammelana becomes more meaningful?
Change the very concept. The Sahitya Parishat should hold a book fair in each district. They have a fund of Rs 28 crore. This will lead to more writers, more works and readers, and eventually language will develop. The Parishat will also develop. The entire concept of Sahitya Sammelana has to be changed – the activities of the Parishat, including book exhibition, should be decentralized, rather than organizing the Sammelana every year with government funding.

What is your message for non-Kannadigas?
Please learn Kannada if you are staying for more than three months in a city. Learn the regional language, Kannada. Kannada has a history of over 2,000 years and has been enriched by poets like Pampa, Ranna and Kuvempu. The local language helps to communicate with local people and create a bond. Learn the local language, respect culture and lead a happy life in Karnataka. If you ignore the regional language and try to promote your own language, it could lead to many problematic events.

What is the importance of theatre in popularizing different forms of Kannada?
Through theatre, we can do wonders. If you are acting in a play, the teacher will ask Hindi-speaking students to write Kannada using the Hindi script, and ask them to perform. They correct their pronunciation and guide them in Kannada drama. By the end of three months, they will be well-versed in Kannada. No other medium can teach a language like a theatre teacher can. The Karnataka government should promote theatre among non-Kannadiga speakers.

What do you have to say about Kannada boards?
There are 65,000 places where the original names are fading. I held a meeting with the NSS and Scouts director along with students, to save the names of these villages. While the Karnataka government has made 60 per cent Kannada mandatory on the display board, I request the government to at least put locations in small fonts on its display board. If these location names are saved, 65,000 Kannada words will be preserved.

Manippady's claim against BYV for debate today: HM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

HOME Minister **Dr G Parameshwara** on Sunday said the issue of former Minority Commission chairman Anwar Manippady's allegation that BJP state chief BY Vijayendra had offered to cover up the panel's report on the encroachments of Waqf properties, when BS Yediyurappa was the CM, would come up for debate in the ongoing legislature session in Belagavi on Monday.

"There is video footage of how he spoke about it and the media also covered it... Now he is changing his words, so I don't know how to take it... One thing is that he went to Vijayendra's house... He himself had said it, who would have known if he hadn't said it...? The media confirmed it when they heard it... If he came forward now and didn't say it now, it means he doesn't believe in his own words. Let's see, it seems that the issue may be raised in the House," he told reporters.

Meanwhile, Parameshwara alleged that there was mismanagement during the Covid-19 pandemic and that the government will expose those involved in the said scam. "We didn't say this, as it is clear in the Justice John Michael D'Cunha Commission's report. If we had said it, it would be easy to say that Congress is doing politics, but it is the panel's report saying how the irregularities took place in each section. There was mismanagement in the purchase of masks, kits, and equipment, following which the medical education department filed an FIR as it is their responsibility. Was it wrong to file an FIR, so what kind of politics is that? Now, based on the report, we have taken action. If there are politicians involved, we will bring out all the details," he stated.

Separately, Parameshwara said that after techie Atul Subhash's suicide, there is big debate on husbands facing trouble. "Now there is a lot of debate on the fact that there are atrocities on men. There is a debate on how the law should be changed as the rights given to women are being misused. There is a discussion on how to bring changes in the IPC (BNS) in the coming days. Some changes should be made at the state level, and also at the Centre," he stated.

> **There was mismanagement in the purchase of masks, kits, and equipment, following which the medical education department filed an FIR as it is their responsibility. Was it wrong to file an FIR, so what kind of politics is that? -** Dr G Parameshwara, Home Minister

KBG for CBI probe into irregularities

KOLAR: "Top leaders of the BJP should respond to the graft allegations being levelled by former Minority Commission chairman Anwar Manippady against the erstwhile BJP dispensation, and a detailed investigation must be launched by the CBI into the same," said Revenue Minister **Krishna Byre Gowda**. He said that already, CM Siddaramaiah has urged PM Narendra Modi to break his silence on the alleged corruption charges against BJP leaders in Karnataka, and order a CBI inquiry into the allegations. Accordingly, a probe must be ordered by the central agency.

Ex-chief said it isn't me who approached him, says Vijayendra

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

BJP state president BY Vijayendra on Sunday said, "Former chairman of the state Minorities Commission Anwar Manippady has clarified that it was not me, but Congress members who approached him. Regarding accusations by Priyank Kharge and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah that I offered Rs 150 crore to Manippady, it is not true and is just a joke. When Congress leaders themselves are involved in exploiting waqf properties, how could I possibly offer any assistance to them? These allegations are baseless. As for the issues raised by the chief minister yesterday (Saturday), we will address them in the House."

Siddaramaiah had alleged that Vijayendra tried to bribe Manipaddy to suppress an investigation against encroachment of waqf properties. On the protest by Panchamasali Lingayats that saw lathicharge by the police in Belagavi last week, Vijayendra said, "The attitude of the government was evident for everyone to see. It was under instructions from higher-ups that the police resorted to lathicharging peaceful Panchamasali Lingayat protesters. This is the peak of arrogance of the state government. Without the directions of the government, the police cannot resort to using such massive force. What's worse is that the government did not apologise for this in the present legislative session. BJP will take up the issue in the House and fight for reservation."

Pressure may mount on CM for internal quota within SC category

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI @Bengaluru

ISSUES after issues over reservations are putting pressure on the Congress government, especially CM Siddaramaiah, as the SC Left has been insisting on implementing the internal quota within the Scheduled Caste category.

After protests by Panchamasali Lingayats that turned violent with police lathicharging them in Belagavi last week, a section of the SC Left community is up in arms. Panchamasali seer Basavamurthy Madara Channayya Swamiji, who led the protest, had warned that members of the community will take to streets if the government delays implementing internal reservation. Protests were held in some parts of the state for a couple of days.

Some analysts believe that BJP emerged with flying colours and crossed the 100 Assembly seat mark, but did not attain a simple majority of 113 seats, because of the SC Left community's aversion towards Congress.

Siddaramaiah, who had asserted that it is 'unconstitutional' for Pachamasali Lingayats to seek the 2A tag of reservation, cannot use the same yardstick for SC communities as the Supreme Court clarified on August 1, 2024, that states can decide on the classification of quota. Two weeks ago, the state government set up the Justice Nagamohan Das commission to look into the issue and give its recommendation within two months. As the Supreme Court had said that the classification should be based on verifiable empirical data, the government has told the commission to consider the 2011 census data to review internal quota scientifically and reasonably.

"The commission has also collected data from DPAR, KPSC, universities and the social welfare department to assess backwardness of 101 communities within the SC category and will soon meet the stakeholders to collect authentic data, if any, from them. The commission is likely to give its recommendations within the deadline," hoped a Congress legislator from the SC Left community.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar and others inaugurate a slew of development works in Gadag district on Sunday | EXPRESS

BJP taking advantage of inequality in society: Siddu

RAGHOTTAM KOPPAR @Gadag

THE opposition combine BJP-JDS is opposing programmes implemented by the state government to empower the poor, said Chief Minister Siddaramaiah here on Sunday.

Launching development projects worth Rs 200 crore in the Ron Assembly constituency in the district, he said the state government has allocated Rs 1,20,000 crore for development this year. "Also, we are putting Rs 52,000 crore directly into the pockets of the people of the state through guarantees. Even then, BJP is criticising the government. It keeps stating that the government does not have money for development and is portraying lies as truth. But people of the state are not stupid enough to believe their lies," he said.

"The 4.5 crore population of the state is directly benefiting from the guarantees. We are also spending thousands of crores on road, water, agriculture and irrigation schemes," he said.

"We are spending thousands of crores for social welfare, for the progress of the Dalit community and for the development of backward communities. But BJP is spreading hatred among castes and religions, and is engaged in only politics of dividing people. Our government is formulating and implementing programmes to create an equal society as desired by Basavanna, Ambedkar, Gandhi and Buddha. But BJP is against equality," he said.

The CM congratulated a woman and her daughter-in-law from Gajendragarh who saved their Grihalakshmi money to drill a borewell.

As it was also an event to dedicate siridhanya or millets, he said, "Cereals are getting a lot of encouragement all over the world. Consuming cereals, which have a high-fibre content, only increases the body's immunity. The state government is providing various facilities to farmers who grow cereals."

GS PATIL ELIGIBLE TO BECOME MINISTER: SIDDU

"(Ron MLA) GS Patil comes to me for the development of the constituency. Patil has demanded that an agricultural college be sanctioned to the constituency in the next budget. The people of the constituency have demanded that Patil be given a ministerial position. Both the demands will be examined positively. Patil has all the qualifications to become a minister. Let's see," CM Siddaramaiah said.

BJP plans mega show of strength in support of BYV on father's B-day

DAVANAGERE: A team led by former minister MP Renukacharya is planning a mega show of strength, in support of state BJP president BY Vijayendra, in Davanagere on February 27. The organisers are planning to assemble as many as 20 lakh people in this city, in Central Karnataka. The gathering is to send a multitude of messages to the BJP top brass, dissident Basanagowda Patil Yatnal, and the ruling Congress, said sources. The team comprising, Renukacharya, other former ministers SA Ravindranath, Katta Subramanya Naidu, and other former MLAs are planning the show of strength on February 27, which is also the birthday of former chief minister BS Yediyurappa. Renukacharya said, "We are planning to assemble 20 lakh people, and strengthen the hands of BJP state president BY Vijayendra." The meeting also decided to give a fitting reply to former MP Dr GM Siddeshwara, who has rebelled against Yediyurappa and joined the Yatnal camp. When asked about Yatnal being discussed at the meeting, Renukacharya said the convention is to support Vijayendra. **ENS**

DATTATREYA JAYANTI

Avadhoota Datta Peeta Mutt seer Sri Ganapathi Sachidananda Swamiji performs abhisheka to Lord Dattatreya at SGS Ashrama in Mysuru on Sunday | UDAYASHANKAR S

NEW LOW PRESSURE AREA TO FORM TODAY, TN DELTA TO GET HEAVY RAIN

Papanasam in Tirunelveli district records highest rainfall of 13cm

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Chennai

CLOSE on the heels of the recent weather system that brought significant rainfall to Chennai and the delta districts, along with extremely heavy downpours in the southern districts of Tamil Nadu, the Regional Meteorological Centre (RMC) on Sunday announced that a new low-pressure area is likely to form over southeast Bay of Bengal on Monday. The system is expected to bring heavy to very heavy rainfall to the delta districts on Tuesday, it stated.

The low-pressure area is to be formed under the influence of an upper-air cyclonic circulation, which was located over the South Andaman Sea and adjoining areas on Saturday and subsequently moved to the South Andaman Sea and the adjoining Bay of Bengal by Sunday. It is likely to become more marked and move west-northwestwards towards the Tamil Nadu coast in the next two days.

As per the RMC's forecast, an orange alert (heavy to very heavy rains) has been issued to Cuddalore, Mayiladuthurai, Nagapattinam and Tiruvarur districts and Karaikal area for Tuesday. Moreover, heavy rain is likely to occur at isolated places over Chengalpattu, Villupuram, Kallakurichi, Ariyalur, Perambalur, Tiruchy, Thanjavur and Pudukkottai districts and Puducherry.

On Wednesday, heavy to very heavy rains are likely in isolated places over Cuddalore and Villupuram districts and Puducherry. Heavy rain is likely to occur at isolated places over Tiruvallur, Chennai, Chengalpattu, Kancheepuram, Ranipet, Tiruvannamalai, Kallakurichi, Mayiladuthurai, Nagapattinam and Tiruvarur districts and Karaikal area, the forecast stated. In the 24 hours ending at 8.30 am on Sunday, Papanasam in Tirunelveli district recorded the highest rainfall at 13cm.

People look at the submerged Eral old bridge owing to the recent rains and subsequent floods in Thoothukudi district on Sunday | V KARTHIK ALAGU

TEMP DIPS IN TG, ADILABAD SHIVERS AT 4.7°C

The temperature levels continue to drop across Telangana, with Agriculture Research Station in Adilabad, recording 4.7°C degrees Celcius on Sunday. In Hyderabad, Patancheru recorded the lowest temperature at 8.6°C. IMD has extended the cold wave warning to Monday for Adilabad and Kumurambheem Asifabad districts

LAND FOR HIGHWAY PROJECTS

HC ruling on taxing compensation could have national impact

BANSY KALAPPA @ Bengaluru

A significant case pending before the Karnataka High Court could lead to a landmark ruling on the taxation of compensation for land acquired for national highway projects, potentially affecting landowners across India. The case, currently being heard by Justice MI Arun, challenges the practice of levying income-tax on compensation received by landowners under the National Highways Act, 1956.

The petitioner, Supriya Shetty, a businesswoman from Mangaluru, argues that tax deductions violate Section 96 of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation, and Resettlement Act, 2013 — RFCTLARR Act. This provision exempts compensation from tax in certain land acquisition cases. The outcome of this case could have far-reaching consequences, as it represents the first judicial review of whether tax exemption applies to land acquisition under the National Highways Act.

Advocate Dheeraj SJ emphasized the significance of the case, noting that if the court rules in favour of the petitioner, it would set a precedent with nationwide implications. "Many of my clients who have lost their land for highway projects are optimistic about a favourable outcome," he said.

The crux of the case lies in whether compensation paid under the National Highways Act, when calculated according to the framework outlined in the RFCTLARR Act, qualifies for tax exemption provided by Section 96.

For the petitioner, the financial stakes are high: In Shetty's case, tax liability-including penalties and interest amounts to nearly Rs 1 crore on a compensation of Rs 1.9 crore, effectively reducing her compensation by half.

The case has drawn attention because it addresses an issue affecting landowners across India. Currently, landowners whose land is acquired for the same national highway project may face differing tax treatments depending on the specific Act invoked for their acquisition. This inconsistency has created a legal anomaly.

Legal experts predict a favourable ruling by the Karnataka HC could also have significant implications for future land acquisitions nationwide. This case could serve as a persuasive precedent unless contradicted by rulings from other High Courts.

Notably, the Central government's 2015 order recognizes that landowners under both the National Highways Act and RFCTLARR Act are "similarly placed", which further strengthens the petitioner's argument against differential tax treatment.

On December 12, 2024, the High Court directed that no coercive action be taken against Shetty until the next hearing, scheduled for January 22, 2025. The case also raises broader constitutional issues regarding equality in land acquisition. If the court concludes that Section 96 does not apply to highway acquisitions, it may need to examine whether such differential treatment violates Article 14 of the Constitution, which guarantees equality before the law.

The Union of India, Central Board of Direct Taxes, and National Highways Authority of India are all party to the case. For thousands of landowners who have lost their land for highway projects, the outcome of this case could determine whether they will receive full compensation or face substantial tax deductions.

22L visit Sabarimala, revenue at ₹163 cr in 29 days

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Pathanamthitta

WITHIN 29 days since the opening of the sanctum sanctorum of the Sabarimala temple for the annual pilgrimage season, it witnessed a footfall of 22.67 lakh devotees and the revenue reached Rs 163.89 crore.

According to Travancore Devaswom Board president P S Prashanth, the hill shrine witnessed more than 4,51,043 devotees compared to previous year. A revenue of Rs 163,89,20,204 was received at the temple this year. Of this, the turnover of Aravana was recorded as Rs 82,67,67,050. The income from the kanikka (offering box) is Rs 52.27 crore. This year, there was Rs 22,76,22,481 increase compared to the same period last year. The turnover of Aravana was Rs 65,26,47,320 during the same period last year. Compared to the same period last year, the kanikka received an increase of Rs 8.35 crore.

The president also said that the 'Thanka Anki' procession, which will leave from Aranmula at 6am on December 22, will reach the Sannidhanam at 5pm on December 25. The deeparadhana will be held at 6:30 pm. The karpoorazhi will be held on December 23 and 24, he said.

Atul's handwriting samples sent to FSL for analysis

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

THE police are working to gather additional evidence and record statements from relatives of the deceased and the accused. Atul's handwriting samples, along with other documents and video footage, have been sent to the FSL for analysis, he said. Atul Subhash, a techie, was a resident of Manjunatha Layout in Marathahalli and was found dead in his apartment on December 9, pasting a sheet that read 'Justice is Due' on his T-shirt.

In a 24-page suicide note, he alleged harassment by his wife and her family. The note detailed claims that false cases had been filed against him, accompanied by demands for Rs 3 crore to settle the disputes. He also accused the family of demanding Rs 30 lakh to grant him visitation rights to his four-year-old son. In addition to the note, he recorded videos before taking the extreme step, which went viral on social media, drawing widespread attention and highlighting the emotional and legal challenges involved in matrimonial disputes.

'Our workload also increased'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"TECHNOLOGY has improved and simultaneously our workload has also increased. Senior officials keep watch on officials' progress by creating WhatsApp groups, and we are expected to show progress on the same day. Finally, they take the staff to task and order a departmental inquiry after condemning their work. It would be fine if they order a departmental inquiry, citing the right reason," he rued.

He said village accountants are upset with routine unscientific targets, but are afraid to express themselves before their seniors. Teachers are unable to teach properly as they are busy implementing government schemes, including distribution of eggs to children. They also pay from their pockets if the price of eggs and chikki is hiked, he added. Due to this, officials suffer from BP, diabetes and kidney and liver diseases, he said, and urged officials to air their problems before senior bureaucrats. Krishnamurthy is now reportedly upset after the video of his speech went viral on social media.

WHEN STARS DESCEND...

Kerala Cultural Minister Saji Cheriyan takes a selfie with veteran actresses Rajasree (extreme left), Mallika Sukumaran and KR Vijaya (extreme right) at the 'Marakkillorumikkalum' event, organised as part of the 29th International Film Festival of Kerala in Thiruvananthapuram on Sunday | BP DEEPU

'Only permanent teachers can have meaningful impact'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

CHILD rights activist Vasudev Sharma said when children without the knowledge of basic concepts are taught in a new language, they go blank. "The result is often dropout, but no one cares about their future as the RTE only mandates compulsory education until Class 8," he said. Recently, nearly one lakh teachers were demoted because of the changes made by the government. Development educationist Niranjanaradhya VP said many teachers are unhappy with the government's decision to restrict those appointed before 2016 to teach students of Classes 1 to 7 as primary school teachers, only to Classes 1 to 5. A Department of Public Instruction official said the department has 35,000 guest teachers, who cater to 21.8 lakh students. Educationists rejected the reliance on guest teachers, calling it a flawed approach. They argued that guest teachers, with no-long term commitment, can quit any moment, leaving students in the lurch. Only permanent teachers, with a permanent responsibility, can make a meaningful impact, they said.

PIECE OF HISTORY LOST?

ASI-protected Neolithic ash mounds destroyed in Ballari

The Neolithic ash mounds destroyed on Saturday | EXPRESS

KIRAN BALANNANAVAR @Ballari

IN a shocker, Neolithic ash mounds that are over 5,000 years old and protected by the state Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in Sangankallu village on the outskirts of Ballari city were destroyed by private developers on Saturday. Furious activists are now demanding action against private developers for destroying the site without seeking permission from the district administration.

The Sangankallu ash mounds are a major tourist attraction and even as the district administration was planning to further develop the site, over 12,000 sqft of the area has been damaged.

The administration has sent a team to inspect the site and also ordered that an FIR be registered against the land developers behind the incident.

Santosh Martin, a wildlife expert from Ballari, said, "It's shocking that we have lost 12,000 sqft of the site. Though the land records are in the name of private pirates, the site was being maintained by the state ASI and district administration. The greed of private persons has led to the destruction of this site."

He said, "We complained to senior officials immediately after the incident. The official has assured us of action against the culprits. We have asked the district administration to put up boards mentioning the importance of the site and also to implement rules to protect the site." A senior district administration official said the local tahsildar has been ordered to file a complaint against those responsible.

The Brihanmumbai Electric Supply & Transport Undertaking
(OF THE BRIHANMUMBAI MAHANAGARPALIKA)

TENDER NOTICE

E-tender is invited for the supply of following item.

1) Supply of 25 MVA, ONAN, 33kV/6.6 kV Power Transformers with Nitrogen Injection Fire Protection System along with Accessories and Spares,

Re – invited e-tenders

(2) 79314 (Corrigendum).

Note: For more details, log on to website **https://mahatenders.gov.in**

PRO/DMM/94/2024 GENERAL MANAGER

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR CELL SCIENCE, (NCCS) PUNE
(An Autonomous Institution of the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India.)
Savitribai Phule Pune University Campus, Pune – 411007.

Advt. No.: NCCS/PMC/P-10/2024

SUB: WALK IN INTERVIEWS FOR PROJECT POSITIONS UNDER EXTRA MURAL PROJECTS

Candidates interested, are invited for Walk in Interviews for different positions to be filled purely on temporary basis at NCCS, under different extra mural projects.

For the detailed specifications of the posts, the prescribed application format and other terms and conditions, please see our **Advt. No. NCCS/PMC/P-10/2024 under Project Positions,** in **Careers** tab, on our website (www.nccs.res.in). For any updates, please check our website. (Hindi, English & Marathi version of this advertisement is available on our website).

Director (Additional Charge), NCCS

Government of Karnataka
Additional Chief Secretary to Government
Finance Department,
Vidhana Soudha, Bengaluru

No.: FD 01 BMB 2024 Date: 12.12.2024

KARNATAKA GOVERNMENT STOCK (SECURITIES)

1. **Aggregate Amount** : **Total Rs. 4000 Crore [Rs. 2000 Crore - 11 Year Tenure and Rs. 2000 Crore - 12 Year Tenure]**
2. **Method of Issue** : **By auction, through PDO, RBI, Mumbai (Fort)**
3. **Date of auction** : **December 17, 2024**

Government of Karnataka invites subscription to the above securities. Copies of the Notification and Application forms may be obtained from PDO, RBI, Bengaluru. Non-competitive bidding facility has been introduced by RBI to encourage participation of retail investors. The Government stock up to 10% of the notified amount of the sale will be allotted to eligible individuals and institutions. Sample Tender Forms and the revised scheme of Non-competitive bidding facility is available on the website **www.rbi.org.in**

DIPR/DD-C.P/3764/KSMCA/2024-25

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDERS (Through KPP Portal Only)

BWSSB invites tenders in two stage tender system from eligible contractors for the following works.

Sl. No.	Name of the Works	Amount put to Tender / EMD Amount
Office of the Chief Engineer (WWM-West), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore - 560 009.		
IFT No.:BWSSB/CE(WWM-W)/ACE(WWM-N-W)/DCE(WWM-E&W)/TA-2/1233/2024-25 Date:13.12.2024		
1	Providing and Laying of 600mm dia DWC SN-8 / RCC NP-3 Class Sewer pipe line from MP Sports Club Road to 5th cross, Railway Layout, Jnana Ganganagar, Bangalore **(3rd Call).**	**Rs. 151.44 Lakhs / Rs. 2.27 Lakhs**
IFT No.:BWSSB/CE(WWM-W)/ACE(WWM-N-W)/DCE(WWM-E&W)/TA-2/1235/2024-25 Date:13.12.2024		
2	Providing and Laying of 500mm dia DWC SN-8 Class Sewer pipe line from Shanimahatma Temple, Mahadeshwara main road to Baldwin School, Lakshman nagar, Herohalli, Bangalore **(3rd Call).**	**Rs.179.42 Lakhs / Rs. 2.69 Lakhs**

For the above works, Last date for receipt of tenders : **30.12.2024 upto 17:30 Hrs.** Technical Tenders will be opened on: **01.01.2025 at 11.00 Hrs.**

Sd/- Chief Engineer (WWM-West)

Office of the Chief Engineer (Kaveri-Operation & Maintenance), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore - 560 009.

IFT No.:BWSSB/CEK(O&M)/TE/TA-01/1823/2024-25		**Date:13.12.2024**
3	Construction of Security Compound Wall with grills from Ramanagara Road to Arkavathi River Pump House in BWSSB property at Kanakapura coming under AEE(K-O&M)-2-1 Sub Division at Harohalli **(2nd Call).**	**Rs. 142.75 Lakhs / Rs. 2.15 Lakhs**

For the above work, Last date for receipt of tenders : **30.12.2024 upto 15:00 Hrs.** Technical Tenders will be opened on: **31.12.2024 at 16.00 Hrs.**

Chief Engineer (Kaveri-Operation & Maintenance)

Office of the Chief Engineer (Design & QA), 9th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore - 560 009.

IFT No.:BWSSB/CE(D&QA)/ACE/TA/2837/2024-25		**Date:12.12.2024**
4	Re-design , Development and hosting of the online new water and sanitary connection (OWC) web & mobile application under the jurisdiction of BWSSB and migration & maintenance.	**Rs. 401.80 Lakhs / Rs. 6,02,700/-**

For the above work, Last date for receipt of tenders : **30.12.2024 upto 16:00 Hrs.** Technical Tenders will be opened on: **31.12.2024 at 16.00 Hrs.**

Chief Engineer (Design & QA)

The details regarding the tender and participatin in the e-procurement process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/JA/3768/2024-25

EDITORIAL

"An economically peaceful and prosperous Sri Lanka is the dream of youth of the nation. My message for the youth is to collectively work for an inclusively developed Sri Lanka"

— A P J Abdul Kalam

INDIAN EXPRESS IS NOT AN INDUSTRY. IT IS A MISSION.

— Ramnath Goenka

LESSONS FOR DEMOCRACY FROM IMPEACHMENT OF SOUTH KOREAN PRESIDENT

A dramatic power grab in South Korea through martial law was undone in just six hours, and President Yoon Suk Yeol impeached a couple of weeks later, showing how an alert parliament and polity can quickly arrest a stunning slide in democracy. It holds lessons for the entire democratic world where brute majority in the house of the people often tends to sow seeds of authoritarianism in the ruling class irrespective of checks and balances. Rushing through the legislative business without giving parliament enough time to examine it can lead to a groundswell of resentment and send people to the streets demanding corrective action. Evolving consensus across the aisle in any legislature irrespective of the head count is what democracy is all about. It demands patience, skill, and perseverance. But Yoon was a man in a hurry. He used lawsuits and criminal investigations to clamp down on free speech, mainly targeting the news media for spreading 'disinformation'. Donald Trump's insurrection after losing the presidential vote in the US four years ago was another example of democratic institutions being subjected to severe tests. Lakhs of people dancing on the streets in Seoul after the successful impeachment showed the nation's resilience against anti-democratic forces.

In South Korea, Yoon won the presidential mandate in 2022 by a whisker. But he ended up being the first president in decades dealing with an opposition-controlled parliament for his entire tenure as his party failed to get a majority—just 108 in a 300-member House. That dissonance and his lack of political experience—he joined the ruling party in 2021 after a long career as a prosecutor—possibly made him impatient. Yoon blamed the opposition for paralysing the administration, raised the North Korean bogey to justify martial law, and sent the armed forces to parliament to thwart a vote against it. But the opposition was smarter and managed to vote it out. With his job approval rating dipping to just 11 percent, Yoon offered a public apology. However, the damage was done. While the ruling party boycotted the first impeachment motion, he lost the second vote by a massive 204-85 margin.

With Yoon's powers suspended, seasoned Prime Minister Han Duck-soo took over as interim president. South Korea's Constitutional Court has up to 180 days to decide if impeachment was the right call. The drama isn't over yet. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty—and democracy.

PREPARE FOR A WEAKER, VOLATILE RUPEE IN 2025

THE rupee has been under pressure ever since Donald Trump has won the US presidential election, triggering capital outflow from India. But the rupee's troubles are not just external. The local currency has been hitting a new low, and the 85-a-dollar level is a hair's breadth away, as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is fast running out of steam to support the currency for long. Trump's economic policies are likely to stoke higher inflation resulting in higher bond yields in the US. This is also likely to delay more rate cuts by the US central bank. The capital outflow from Indian and other emerging markets has also been caused by the expectation that Trump's policies will benefit the US economy in the long run. Therefore, investors across the globe have been thronging to the country to pre-empt an equity and debt market bull run in future. The rupee is not getting much support internally too. Domestic economy has been in a slow lane for over a quarter, and most analysts do not see any reversal in fortune in the current financial year. The over-stretched equity markets have also prodded foreign investors to look for markets where valuations are more in line with the economic realities.

These factors have kept the rupee under pressure, even if the volatility has been low. The rupee has shed 2 percent against the dollar in 2024, and the depreciation has been hastened by Trump's victory. The Indian currency that began the year around 83.2 a dollar level in January is now starting at the possibility of hurtling down to 85-86 levels by the end of next year. RBI has been intervening in the forex market with reports suggesting the central bank has taken a $100 billion bet (in the third quarter) in the forex market to neutralise the volatility in the rupee following the US election results. But the currency market is abuzz with the view that RBI's bloated position in the non-deliverable forward (NDF) market is adding to the pressure on the rupee. The RBI's NDF position (over $60 billion) signals that the central bank has done its bit, and may find it difficult to defend the rupee for long given the way external and internal factors are panning out. The rupee, in the coming days, is set for more volatility with a downward bias. Prepare for the rupee at 85/dollar soon with 86 levels not far away.

QUICK TAKE

DON'T SHELVE THE MISSION

THE National Mission on Libraries provides financial assistance to two libraries in every state and Union territory. The funds are meant to improve infrastructure, upgrade technology and create facilities for the differently abled. But numbers shared in the Rajya Sabha last week showed that the 66 state libraries listed for the mission have not been given almost half the allotted total of about Rs 80 crore. None of the funds marked for Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Punjab and Chandigarh have been used. It's a shame in a country where there is one rural library for every 11,500 people, against the norm of one for every 3,000 readers.

The Dissanayake-led NPP has committed to reducing government expenditure, but how economic consolidation will take shape in the coming year and beyond is still unclear

CHALLENGES BEFORE THE NEW SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT

DILRUKSHI HANDUNNETTI

Award-winning journalist and lawyer. She is a founder and director of the Colombo-based Center for Investigative Reporting (CIR)

SOURAV ROY

IN 2024, Sri Lanka witnessed seismic political shifts. In the second half of this year, voters installed a hitherto untried president and a new government, with the fervent hope that the old order should give way to a better new order. It's taken the rather conservative Sri Lankan voters 76 years to move away from feudal parties and experiment with a party mostly remembered for two violent uprisings in the South. The September and November electoral results would appear to be the culmination of the 2022 political unrest that demanded a "system change".

Since the assumption of office, both the president and his government appear to have eased themselves into work without fanfare and focus on immediate tasks. The very first was to avoid disruption to 'normalcy'. As the government marks its first month in office, it has ensured continuity through the International Monetary Fund (IMF) formula—prudent, given that the island's economy is in tatters and requires much repair.

On December 3, President Anura Dissanayake made the government's policy statement, which contained a practical acceptance of the agreement with the IMF reached by President Ranil Wickremesinghe, with a commitment to implement it in full. The President told parliament the island's economy was hanging by a thread and there was no room for any mistakes.

For a man mandated to introduce radical economic and political changes to Sri Lanka, it cannot come easy. During the presidential election campaign, Dissanayake vowed to renegotiate the IMF bailout to ensure austerity measures do not weigh too heavily on the island's poor. His was a mandate to snap out of the rejected economic model of multilateral borrowing. Easier said than done, as Dissanayake and his team soon found out.

Some serious efforts were made during Wickremesinghe's rule to stabilise the economy within the constraints Sri Lanka had to operate from. People, angry with the Rajapaksa regime and viewing Wickremesinghe as an extension of the Rajapaksa interests, voted for an overwhelming political change twice this year.

The outgoing Wickremesinghe warned against changes to the agreement that could delay the fourth tranche, sending immediate economic shockwaves. In a quiet commitment to continuity, Dissanayake also retained the governor of the central bank and the secretary to the treasury and the ministry of finance, who have been leading the reform process.

Despite minor rumblings, the NPP government remains quite popular as people wait for the fulfilment of electoral pledges. As the government naturally avoids any rash moves in the economic front, the absence of the promised renegotiations of the IMF bailout is not lost on the public.

The NPP's commitment to revisit the IMF's bailout considered the impact of harsh austerity measures, especially following the 2022 economic collapse that spiked inflation and food insecurity. A 'forensic audit' on external debt has already been promised, and despite the political undertones one may read in that, it would be in the government's interest to do so.

However, the NPP has remained consistent on the 'continuity' aspect of the agreement and the ongoing debt restructuring, to rest some fears about the possibility of a complete disruption of the IMF agenda, causing economic instability and unsettling external creditors. This again spells a responsible and pragmatic approach despite the daunting challenges ahead.

The JVP/NPP also has a long-defended stance of managing key state-owned enterprises in public ownership and may mean the possibility of restructuring non-strategic enterprises and a move to increase domestic production and exports to boost external reserves.

It is important to acknowledge the evolution of the JVP/NPP's economic approach as a far cry from any previous. Today, in practice, it is pro-free trade, pro-export and pro-foreign investment. There will be sectors that will experience private sector-led growth but with expanded welfare budgets to serve the island's vulnerable sections.

When the previous government entered the 17th loan agreement with the IMF in 2023, the key targets included a reduction in the ratio of public debt and a reduction in government borrowing to 13 percent of GDP between 2027 and 2032, among others. But the achievement of several targets will come with political costs and the NPP is aware of possible electoral repercussions.

The year 2022 certainly was a political reformist moment. There was genuine interest in finding the reset button for the island's flagging economy and the body politic, but it also showcased people's reluctance to accept heavy jolts, economic and political. Gotabaya Rajapaksa, the president who received the largest political mandate, was forced to resign through a series of public agitations for allowing the island to hit the economic nadir. It carries a permanent lesson for any Sri Lankan government about public tipping points.

The coming year will see the government going to poll again, this time at the local authorities and provincial levels. In addition to addressing the needs of the country's most economically vulnerable people, the government will serve its own political cause to manage some public expectations by honouring some promises, particularly in the areas of reducing the cost of living and taxation.

In 2025, there will also have to be greater clarity around the government's economic agenda. The NPP has committed to reducing government expenditure, but how economic consolidation will take shape in 2025 and beyond is still unclear. There needs to be the formulation/implementation of an economic development agenda that can cater to short, medium and long-term needs. Some of it will have to be rapid and convincing to the people.

The view from the opposition is different to the ringside view of the government. There is overwhelming public trust in the new government as people hope against hope that this would be Sri Lanka's last chance to become both politically and economically stable. Much rides on those public aspirations.

President Dissanayake will do well to wear the thorny crown with immense care into 2025 and beyond, avoiding any misstep, for his is an administration that is keenly watched, not only by opponents for fault-finding, but by the people who treat it as their last chance for recovery.

(Views are personal)

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ANNIVERSARY OF THE STORY OF THE LORD

RENUKA NARAYANAN

FAITHLINE

THIS year, Gita Jayanti fell on December 11. This event commemorates the anniversary of the revelation of the discourse called the *Bhagavad Gita* or Song of God in the *Mahabharata*. It was revealed by Krishna to Arjuna on the first day of the 18-day battle of Kurukshetra.

In the traditional calendar, this is the Ekadasi day of the *Shukla Paksha* or the moon's bright half, in the month of *Mrgashirsha*. The month falls in November-December. This year, it is from Friday, November 22 to Saturday, December 21.

The custom at temples across India and in many homes on Gita Jayanti is to conduct a recital of the *Gita's* 700 verses. If we would like to somehow share this, we could look up and recite even one verse, just to consciously mark the day.

Many also fast as Ekadashi has been iconic since olden times as a public detox day. We are meanwhile expected to develop our conscience, give generously of our affection and resources, behave politely, and work hard for the greater good.

That, anyway, is the mega life plan the *Gita* suggests—and after allowing everybody the longest rope, somewhere along the way, the book likes to catch us with its karmic quotient, that as we do, so we reap.

It's usual for people to speedily acquire 'favourite' verses, for the *Gita* has such a profound and poignant quality, it touches hearts and inspires people to live brave, decent lives despite the fraud squad that works overtime around us in this *Kali Yuga*.

The *Gita* wastes no time and is good to go from its first verse: "*dharmakshetre kurukshetresamaveta yuyutsavah/mamaka pandavaschaiva kim akurvata samjaya*". This means, "On the battleground of Dharma, on the field of the Kurus, when my sons and the sons of Pandu assembled eagerly to fight, what did they do, Sanjaya?". And Sanjaya, gifted for the occasion with long-range vision, reports the happenings faithfully to Dhritirashtra like a TV channel.

A favourite part with many for its sheer sound effects and rhythm is at the start: *tatah shvetairhayairyukte mahati syandane sthitau/madhavah panavashchaiva divyau shankhau pradadhmatuh* (Then, from amidst the Pandava army, seated in a glorious chariot drawn by white horses, Madhav and Arjun blew their divine war conches).

The next verse lets us have it: *pañchajanyam hrishikesho devadattam dhanañjayah/paundram dadhmau maha-shankham bhima-karma vrikodarah*, meaning, 'Hrishikesha blew his conch shell, called Panchajanya, and Arjun blew the Devadutta. Bheem, the voracious eater and performer of herculean tasks, blew his mighty conch, called Paundra.' In this verse, Krishna is addressed as 'Hrishikesha' which means the Lord of the mind and senses.

Another favourite chapter with many is the 10th, which rolls out like a movie montage. Arjuna wants to know how he may recognise God, who is not pleased with this question. God feels, "Why did I give man a brain and intelligence if they can't be bothered to use them?" A touch of annoyance is evident when Krishna says, "Very well, I'll tell you since you are dear to me, Arjuna".

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Gita Jayanti, which fell on December 11 this year, commemorates the anniversary of the revelation of the discourse called the *Bhagavad Gita* or Song of God in the *Mahabharata*. It was revealed by Krishna to Arjuna on the first day of the 18-day battle of Kurukshetra

And there it comes. God begins by saying, "Those who know Me as unborn and beginning-less, and as the supreme Lord of the universe, they are free from illusion and released from all evils. From Me alone arise the varieties of qualities such as intellect, knowledge, clarity of thought, forgiveness, truthfulness, control over the senses and mind, joy and sorrow, birth and death, fear and courage, non-violence, equanimity, contentment, austerity, charity, fame, and even infamy."

"To those whose minds are always united with Me in loving devotion, I give them the divine knowledge by which they can attain Me. Out of compassion for them, I, who dwell within their hearts, destroy the darkness born of ignorance, with the luminous lamp of knowledge."

What about giving us uncomprehending mortals some living examples, though? To give just a small sample from this chapter, the Lord says, "Among trees, I am the pipal. Know me to be the lion among animals, and Garuda among the birds. Of water creatures, I am the crocodile, and of flowing rivers, I am the Ganga. In debates I am the logical conclusion. I am the first letter 'A' among all; I am the dual word in grammatical compounds. Among feminine qualities I am fame, prosperity, fine speech, memory, intelligence, courage, and forgiveness. Of the 12 months of the calendar I am *Mrgashirsha*, and of seasons I am spring, which puts forth flowers. I am just punishment for the lawless, and proper conduct in those who seek victory. Among secrets I am silence, and in the wise I am their wisdom."

The *Gita* can make your head pound with sound as in this example where Arjuna praises the Lord: "*param brahma param dhama/pavitram paramam bhavaan/purusham shaasvatam divyam/adidevam ajam vibhum*", meaning 'Supreme Being, Supreme Abode, the Ultimate Purifier, the Eternal Divine Person'.

Canto eleven, where the Lord transfigures himself to appease Arjuna's audacious longing, has some of the most beautiful poetry in the known history of the word.

Canto sixteen that describes the difference between 'divine' and 'demoniac' natures has old cult status with great magical powers attributed to it.

This thrilling book is where we believe God transcends his avatar to his cosmic form. We believe that we hear God speaking directly to us as 'God', to those of us who ask in genuine distress, "*katham vidyaam aham yogim*" (How may I know Thee, Lord?).

(Views are personal)

(shebaba09@gmail.com)

MAILBAG

WRITE TO: letters@newindianexpress.com

Steady PM

Ref: *Not breaking India is Soros's sorrow* (Dec 15). George Soros, with all his money, power and global network of foundations, could at best create false narratives against PM Narendra Modi and India. He couldn't shake Modi, for our PM stands on the rock of truth.

G Nataraja Perumal, Elathur

Modi's power

Soros has been successful elsewhere in destabilising economies of a few countries through money and power. As the last para in the article stated, Modi's hat-trick return to power is a slap to Soros and his disciples in the Indian opposition.

Parthasarathy Mandadi, Tirupati

Advertising challenges

Ref: *How effective is pervasive advertising* (Dec 15). Pervasive advertising represents an innovative strategy in contemporary marketing, utilising technology and consumer insights to craft targeted, relevant, and engaging brand experiences. However, as brands strive to find a balance between being noticeable and becoming intrusive, they must also consider challenges like ad fatigue and privacy issues.

N R Jagannath, Bengaluru

Indispensable tool

In a highly competitive business environment prevailing in India, advertisements have become an indispensable tool for private and public enterprises to enhance sales. But it is important that advertisers do not mislead people as a huge majority of the latter are not mature.

S Ramakrishnasayee, Chennai

Inflammatory communication

Ref: *Trump effect: The power of noun and verb* (Dec 15). The editorial highlights Trump's ability to use simple yet powerful language to connect with his supporters. His use of nouns and verbs is indeed a masterclass in rhetoric. However, I would like to add that Trump's communication style is not without its criticisms. His use of language has been accused of being inflammatory, discriminatory, and divisive.

Raju Kolluru, Kakinada

Party hypocrisy

Ref: *PM: Cong tasted blood, wounded Constitution* (Dec 15). The truth is that not only the Congress and the BJP but all other ruling parties at the Centre and states had done their bit to subvert the letter and spirit of the Constitution to suit their needs. Unfortunately, they had lamented and spoken for the Constitution only when another party opposed to them was the guilty one.

C G Kuriakose, Kothamangalam

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

Chairman of the Board: **Manoj Kumar Sonthalia** Editor: **Santwana Bhattacharya**

Published by **R K Jhunjhunwala** on behalf of Express Publications (Madurai) Private Limited, at No. 1, Queen's Road, Bengaluru - 560 001 and printed by him at Express Press, Plot No. 2A, Bommasandra Industrial Area, 4th Phase, Survey No. 46, Part Yarandahalli Village, Jigani Hobli, Anekal Taluk. Bengaluru - 560 099. **Bengaluru.** Vol. 60, No. 299 RNI Reg. No. 3457/1960. Phone: 080-22866893. **Copyright:** Express Publications (Madurai) Private Limited. All rights reserved. Reproduction in any manner, electronic or otherwise, in whole or in part, without prior written permission is prohibited.

POSTS OF THE DAY

Rahul Gandhi @RahulGandhi
Tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel ji on his death anniversary. Every step taken by him to preserve the unity of the country will continue to inspire us.

Jairam Ramesh @Jairam_Ramesh
In his rant in the Lok Sabha, the PM attacked Nehru on the First Amendment to the Constitution, which was carried out with effect from June 18th, 1951.

Keshav Prasad Maurya @kpmaurya1
For 20 years, Congress handed over the steering of its dilapidated vehicle to its immature leader Rahul Gandhi, which made it less of a political figure.

'NEED TO BALANCE THE ART AND SCIENCE OF MEDICINE'

Former AIIMS director Randeep Guleria explains the shift from clinical to investigative medicines and the rising cost during the 20th edition of Delhi Dialogues

DR Randeep Guleria, Chairman, Internal Medicine, Respiratory & Sleep Medicine, Medanta, says the health sector has improved a lot because there is a huge push by the government to open more hospitals and colleges. He, however, says there is need to focus a lot on quality along with quantity. **Excerpts**:

Shahid Faridi: How has medicine changed over the years?
What was clinical medicine when I was training has now moved to what is known as investigative medicine. We were taught that you examine a patient in detail and do the least amount of investigation, reach a diagnosis and start the treatment. The focus now is to spend less time examining the patient and write more investigations. It has added to the cost of medicine. How can we balance the art and science of medicine so that we are able to provide good patient care, which is affordable, of high quality, and train doctors in that respect?

We are losing the art of medicine where you examine and talk to the patient. I think that's important, because sometimes you can get a lot out of the patient just by listening to him. We have moved away from that and would order a battery of tests. Sometimes you are not sure whether a report is correct or not, but you go ahead. The focus is more on getting investigations done, which I think is not good in our country, because as you go to rural India, all these tests will not be available. The other thing that has driven this is defensive medicine. This is also adding to the cost of healthcare.

The health sector has improved because there is a huge push by the government to open more and more hospitals and colleges. But I think we also need to focus a lot on quality along with quantity. We are seeing that government medical colleges have become less and the private ones are more. The NMC is trying to cap fees. But the cost of medical education has gone up tremendously. And that is impacting the thought process of students and the way they practice subsequently. So if we want to feel strongly that medicine should be a service rather than a business, then you have to train people from that point of view and with that mindset.

Shahid Faridi: Do you think this is because of mushrooming of private hospitals?
It is. The push from the private sector is driving investigative medicine, because it is looking at returns. And returns are more from the investigation and not from just examining. We need to balance it out. I'm not saying investigations are bad but it should not be at the expense of clinical medicine or the art of medicine. One has to see it from the patient point of view. If you're in a remote area, you can't say I can't diagnose this unless I have an ultrasound machine. That is the wrong part of the training.

Santwana Bhattacharya: There has been a sudden rise of incidence of heart attack deaths even among the young fitness freaks. What do you think is the reason that even as young as 17 year olds are dying of heart attacks?
One myth is that it is related to COVID or vaccinations. There is no data to support any of the two. I don't think we have enough evidence one way or the other to say that more deaths are occurring due to Long COVID because of clotting or vaccine side-effect.

Secondly, we are becoming more aware because of social media. I think it's also related to a change in our lifestyle. We have seen that heart diseases are occurring much earlier in

our population than in the West. It is because of a genetic factor and also our lifestyle. Now, the type of diet that we have is not what we used to have earlier. The type of physical activity now is different. There is less activity among the younger generation, and more time is being spent on the Internet or on phone. The diet is becoming more synthetic rather than natural with fresh fruits, green leafy vegetables.

Kavita Bajeli-Datt: Is Covid-19 over? Do you think new mutations will lead to another pandemic?
Covid-19, as a pandemic, is over. But the virus has not gone away. Covid became a pandemic, and therefore, the viruses evolved and will stay with us. In the coronavirus family, a new virus is going to stay with us and cause illnesses. So we still have cases but not as many as we saw during the pandemic.

During the early stage of the pandemic, the virus was evolving very rapidly. For the last two years, Omicron has stayed and the subsequent variants are sub-lineages of the variants. So the virus has stabilised for almost two years and if it stays like that, then we have a good amount of immunity. We will get Covid, but it will not cause that severe illness or that outbreak that we saw.

Unless the virus changes dramatically, which it has not done, and becomes a novel new virus, we will probably not have another pandemic. However, we need to have active surveillance for newer outbreaks, not only for Covid, but for another virus known as H5N1 (Bird Flu). It has been there for many decades, but has now surfaced.

Kavita Bajeli-Datt: Is Long Covid a real concern?
It is. The number of cases has come down. If you look at data, more cases of Long Covid were there after the Delta wave. What one has found is that in most patients, after about nine months or so, many of them recovered from Long Covid, but some continue to have symptoms. I have a few patients who have Long Covid, who still have these symptoms of sweating, palpitation, not able to sleep, and panic attacks. In some patients, it stays on for a long time. I think we need to have more research on Long Covid.

Parvez Sultan: What are the side-effects of Covid-19 vaccines and which one was better — Covishield and Covaxin?
It depends on what you took. There was a debate on the advantage of taking a mixture of the two vaccines. There was a study, which showed that it is effective (taking the two vaccines) as it causes better immune reaction. In one state, the booster that was given by mistake was different from the original one. The study found that the antibody response was better. Most of the vaccines that were available in India were Covishield. So it is difficult to say which vaccine was more effective.

Regarding side-effects, none of them really showed a lot of concern. There was some initial concern of a higher chance of clotting. But the efficacy was far better than the minimal side-effects. But then all drugs will have side-effects.

Suchitra Kalyan Mohanty: Delhi has become a gas chamber? How does the long-term exposure to air pollution impact health?
I think that air pollution is a medical emergency. We need to aggressively tackle this problem. We have done it in the past. We had this problem in the late 90s also when pollution level was very high. The Supreme Court intervened and a lot of things were done and CNG came in. It really helped in achieving good AQI in the early 2000s. However, we lost out on all those benefits because we continued to have construction, and more diesel vehicles started coming into the city. Now, every year we are having this pollution problem.

Pollution causes an acute respiratory problem, both in people who have underlying respiratory diseases like asthma, COPD (Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), and even in the general population. It's an acute problem which causes more admissions, and impacts the overall quality of life.

You will see that there are very few good AQI days in a year in Delhi. It's only during the monsoon months that the AQI comes down to an acceptable level. Some data show that long-term exposure can increase the chance of lung cancer and cardiac issues. One research paper showed that living in an environment with high air pollution is as big a risk factor for heart attacks as is high cholesterol or smoking. There are now studies which suggest that even Dementia and Alzheimer's are higher in the population living in regions exposed to severe pollution.

Other syndromes like metabolic disorders tend to be higher. Air pollution affects the immune system. Studies show it can contribute to autoimmune diseases.

Kavita Bajeli-Datt: How do you think the governments, both at the Centre and the state, have tackled air pollution?
We need to look at sustainable solutions and it's not something that we are doing. There is a lot of knee-jerk reaction. If you look at the London smog in the late 50s, the pictures from that time would remind you of Delhi — dark and black. In December of 1952, there was a huge peak of bad AQI and almost 4,000 patients died in less than 10 days. They were able to bring in a lot of legislation. Now it is better in London, Los Angeles and New Mexico.

Kavita Bajeli-Datt: Your suggestions to authorities in checking air pollution?
I think there are a lot of legislation and plans in place. Implementation is the challenge. I think all citizens should actively participate. It has to become a movement. I remember, a long time back one journalist told me that unless an election is won or lost on air pollution, nothing is going to happen. Deaths caused by air pollution are like a silent killer. You can say that a certain number of people died from dengue or Covid, but it's hard to quantify deaths from air pollution.

Santwana Bhattacharya: Sleep disorder was a symptom among 65 plus, but do you see this among the young?
Two things have happened to the younger generation. One, the work profile has changed. So the body's circardian rhythm has gotten altered and that has led to sleep disorders. Secondly, overweight and obesity have led to obstructive sleep apnea in the younger age group. Young people who are overweight snore a lot, have daytime somnolence, and go off to sleep while talking or while doing something monotonous. It has also been linked to unexplained road accidents.

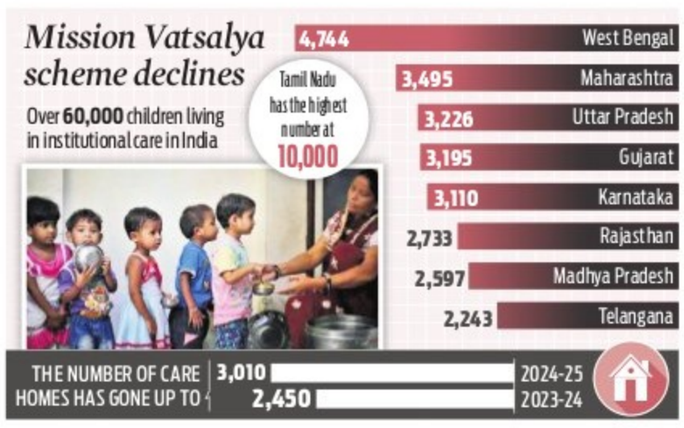
Preetha Nair: Kerala is lauded for its robust healthcare system. But why do all these viral diseases get detected there first?
When a shift from communicable to non-communicable diseases was going on in the country from 1990-2016, the first state which showed this change was Kerala. The state moved dramatically from infection control to non-communicable disease. This was a good thing. One thing that has to be seen is how good your surveillance mechanism is. If you have a good health set-up, you will pick up the outbreak earlier. Besides, Kerala has a lot of international connectivity. So infections from outside India are reported there first.

60K kids living in care homes, TN leads

KAVITA BAJELI-DATT @ New Delhi

OVER 60,000 children are living in institutional care in India, with Tamil Nadu housing approximately 10,000 of them, according to government data. Though the number of children living in these institutional care under the Mission Vatsalya scheme declined this year, the child care institutions network further spread across the country.

Minister of State for Women and Child Development Savitri Thakur in the Lok Sabha said the ministry is administering the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (JJ Act, 2015), which is the primary legislation for ensuring safety, security, dignity and well-being of Children in Need of Care and Protection and Children in Conflict with Law (CCL) by catering to their basic needs through care, protection, development, treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration. Tamil Nadu housed the highest number of orphan children in their institutional care homes for the third year in the row. In 2023-24, the figure was 10,118, the minister said while sharing the data.



The southern states saw 13,877 orphan children being housed in these care homes in 2021-22, the number dipped to 7,785 in 2022-23. The other states that housed highest number of children in 2023-24 are West Bengal (4744), Maharashtra (3495), Uttar Pradesh (3226), Gujarat (3195), Karnataka (3110), Rajasthan (2733), Madhya Pradesh (2597), Telangana (2243), Bihar (2227), Andhra Pradesh (1546), Assam (1241), Jharkhand (1238), Delhi (1216), Mizoram (1172), Jammu and Kashmir (1104), and Meghalaya (1031).

The minister said the number of care homes have gone up in the last three years. While there were 2,245 institutional care homes in 2021-22, the number went up to 2,305 in 2022-23. In 2023-24, there were 2,450 care homes, in 2024-25, the number went up to 3,010.

In 2024-25, the figure was 318. In 2021, it was 225, the next year it was 221. In 2023-24, the number of children living in these care homes was 320. Tamil Nadu was followed by Uttar Pradesh at 24 care homes. The other states with high number of such institutions are West Bengal (216), Karnataka (212), Rajasthan (182), Odisha (143), Madhya Pradesh (131), Maharashtra (126), Chhattisgarh (110), Bihar (107), Andhra Pradesh (98) and Telangana (92).

ASI decides to rope in retired officers to conduct departmental inquiries

PARVEZ SULTAN @ New Delhi

THE Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has decided to establish a panel of retired senior government officials to conduct departmental inquiries. This panel will consist of officials who have held positions at least at the level of deputy secretary in the Central Government or equivalent positions in state governments or Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).

A three-member committee will be formed, comprising joint secretary or director-level officers, including the Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO) of the ASI's vigilance directorate. This committee will be responsible for finalizing the empanelment of former government officers. It will be valid for three years and will screen the applications received. The remuneration for the committee members will be based on their experience and the nature of the case.

The proposal to engage retired officers for conducting departmental inquiries has been under consideration for some time, and the ASI has recently taken the decision to create a panel to investigate "delinquent" officials.

The number of disciplinary cases assigned to inquiry officers may be restricted to eight a year and may not handle more than four cases simultaneously, said officials.

According to the terms and conditions for the appointment, an inquiry officer must submit the report within 180 days from the engagement date after completing the investigation. An extension beyond 180 days can be granted only by the approval of the authority.

Committee composition
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45% of springs in Himalayas dry up in 4 decades, rising temp key factor: Study

JITENDRA CHOUBEY @ New Delhi

APPROXIMATELY 45% of the springs in the Himalayas have completely dried up due to rising temperatures and a decline in both rainfall and snowfall over the past four decades, says a recent study.

This reduction will impact the rural communities' drinking water, agriculture, and daily household needs. The study surveyed 276 spring sites in the western Himalayas, primarily in Himachal Pradesh.

It revealed that one-third of the spring water discharge has decreased. Of the springs surveyed, 45% have completely dried up, while 26% have become semi-active, transitioning from perennial springs to those that depend on the monsoon.

The research focused on four Himachal districts, analyzing 117 spring sites in Chamba, 53 in Lahaul-Spiti, 48 in Kullu, and 58 in Kinnaur. The findings showed that 58 of the 117 springs in Chambat, 21 of the 53 in Lahaul-Spiti, 17 of the 48 in Kullu, and 29 of the 58 in Kinnaur have either vanished or completely dried up.

It underscores the concerning trend in the western Himalayas, where 45% of the springs have dried up and 26% are now monsoon dependants, resulting in reduced water discharge and soil moisture loss.

The researchers examined 276 spring water sites across four Himachal districts. They analyzed 117 springs in Chamba, 53 in Lahaul-Spiti, 48 in Kullu, and 58 in Kinnaur. The findings revealed that 58 of the 117 springs in Chamba district, 21 out of 53 in Lahaul-Spiti, 17 out of 48 in Kullu, and 29 out of 58 in Kinnaur have either vanished or dried up.

The study, titled "Climatic Impacts on Spring Disappearance in the Indian Himalayas," was published in a Taylor & Francis journal.

MPs' day-out from House & cricket field beckons

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

PARLIAMENTARIANS on Sunday were seen taking on each other, but not inside the House. They squared off on a cricket field in a friendly 20-over match played at Delhi's Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium to raise awareness against tuberculosis.

Lok Sabha Speaker XI, led by Hamirpur MP Anurag Thakur, defeated the Rajya Sabha Chairman XI by 73 runs. Thakur was adjudged the 'man of the match' for his unbeaten innings of 111 runs. Union minister Kiren Rijiju led the RS team. All MPs wore jerseys with a message -- 'TB Harega Aur Bharat Jitega' (TB will lose and India will win). Playing first, LS Speaker XI team set a target of 251 but the RS team could score 178 runs with a loss of eight wickets. Former cricketer Mohammad Azharuddin playing for the RS team scored 74 runs.

BJP MP Anurag Thakur during a cricket match between Lok Sabha Speaker XI and Rajya Sabha Chairman XI teams in New Delhi on Sunday | PARVEEN NEGI

Best bowler award was given to Deepender Singh Hooda while the best fielder was Nishikant Dubey. Azharuddin was declared best batman and the golden duck was jointly held by Ram Mohan Naidu and Imran Pratapgarhi.

Inaugurating the match, Speaker Om Birla said, "The Parliament of India represents 140 crore people and expects that the society should benefit from the experience of the public representatives. We have to make India TB free by 2025 and this friendly match of MPs will work to spread awareness about TB eradication. If we all work with full determination to spread awareness about TB elimination in our respective areas, then we will definitely be successful in eradicating TB from India."

At the closing ceremony, Union Minister for Commerce Piyush Goyal said,"Such events will give more strength to the resolution of the PM to make India TB free by 2025."

Thakur said, "Awareness about TB should reach every corner of the country. To promote this cause, we have united with team spirit, without any politics. State governments should also come forward to spread awareness against TB through such events. The target of eradicating TB worldwide is 2031. From 2015, there has been a 38 percent decline in TB related deaths in India. There is an approximate 18 percent decline in new cases."

ORGAN DONATION

Vital organs of a brain-dead man which were airlifted from Jhalawar to Jaipur and Jodhpur on Sunday were transplanted successfully to eight patients, an official said.

17 VEHICLES USED FOR ILLEGAL MINING SEIZED IN J-K

INDIA	Max	Min		Max	Min
Ahmedabad	29	13	Mumbai	33	19
Bhopal	26	08	Panaji	30	21
Jaipur	24	07	Patna	26	08
Amritsar	22	02	Lucknow	42	27
Chennai	29	23	Port Blair	34	28
Kolkata	26	14	Imphal	23	18
Srinagar	10	-07	Chandigarh	42	23

Maha cabinet wears a 'new' look

CM Fadnavis drops 9 old faces from BJP, Shinde eases out 6 and Ajit Pawar ignores 5

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @ Mumbai

IN his third term as the Maharashtra chief minister, Devendra Fadnavis on Sunday chose a new and young team to govern the state for the next five years. In the cabinet expansion, Fadnavis dropped nine old faces from his own party who were part of the earlier Eknath Shinde government.

Deputy CM Shinde dropped six old faces from Shiv Sena and deputy CM Ajit Pawar denied opportunity to five old faces from NCP in the new cabinet. The BJP got 20 berths -- 17 cabinet ministries and three ministers of state. The Shiv Sena got 12 berths -- 10 of cabinet rank and two MoS -- and NCP 10 -- nine cabinet ministers and one MoS.

The young faces sworn in as ministers from the BJP are Jaykumar Rawal, Pankaja Munde, Ashok Uike, Ashish Shelar, Shivendrasinh Bhosale, Jaykumar Gore, Sanjay Savkare, Nitesh Rane, Akash Fundkar, Madhuri Misal, Pankaj Bhoyar, and Meghna Bordikar Sakore. The young faces from the Shiv Sena are Sanjay Rathod, Uday Samant, Sanjay Shirsat, Pratap Sarnaik, Bharat Gogavale, Prakash Abitkar, Ashish Jaiswal, and Yogesh Kadam. The young ministers from the NCP include Dhananjay Munde, Datta Bharane, Aditi Tatkare, Manikrao Kokate, Narahari Jirwal, Makarand Patil, Babasaheb Patil, and Indranil Naik.

Maharashtra Governor CP Radhakrishnan, CM Devendra Fadnavis, Deputy CM Ajit Pawar and Eknath Shinde during the swearing-in ceremony in Nagpur | PTI

In what is considered a bold move, Fadnavis dropped former finance minister Sudhir Mungantiwar and former PWD minister Ravindra Chavan. He, however, kept former ministers Chandrakant Patil and Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil in his cabinet, both known as close to Union home minister Amit Shah.

Pawar dropped two old and prominent faces -- former deputy CM Chhagan Bhujbal and former home minister Dilip Walse Patil. The two were founder members of the NCP when former Union minister Sharad Pawar broke from the Congress and formed the party in 1999. Shinde also dropped regular faces like Deepak Kesarkar and Tanaji Sawant.

Fadnavis earlier said that he wants to make a new Maharashtra and will ensure that the growth of the state will not stop. "CM Fadnavis was very clear and keen about whom to induct in his new cabinet. If you check the names of the sworn-in ministers, it will show that Fadnavis has formed the team with young and new faces plus a few experienced hands. So, it means he not only wants to lead the team, but he has a plan to groom the new leadership within the government by giving them ample administrative experience," a BJP leader said, requesting anonymity. "Therefore, new faces, who neither had legacy nor a godfather in politics, have been inducted as ministers in the Mahayuti government. Besides, the average age of this cabinet will be quite younger in comparison with previous ministries in Maharashtra," the BJP leader said.

Region-wise, a maximum of nine ministers are from the western Maharashtra region. With eight ministers, the north Maharashtra comes second. Seven ministers are from the Vidarbha region. The Marathwada region will be represented by six ministers. Three ministers have been have been inducted from the Mumbai/Thane region and five from the coastal Konkan region.

Former ministers dropped

In what is considered a bold move, Fadnavis dropped former finance minister Sudhir Mungantiwar and former PWD minister Ravindra Chavan. He, however, kept former ministers Chandrakant Patil and Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil in his cabinet, both known as close to Home minister Amit Shah. Pawar dropped two old and prominent faces. The two were founder members of the NCP when former Union minister Sharad Pawar broke from the Congress and formed the party in 1999.

Cong changes tack, seeks to adopt 'soft Hindutva' to check BJP in Jammu

FAYAZ WANI @ Srinagar

AFTER a poor assembly poll show in Jammu, Congress leaders are calling for a change of strategy and adopting a soft Hindutva policy to fight the BJP in the Hindu belt of the region. In the recently held polls, Congress won six Assembly seats in the 90-member House.

The party won five seats in the Valley and one from Muslim belt of the Jammu region. Not a single candidate from the Congress won from the Hindu belt of Jammu, though the party's vote share had increased by 5-10 per cent in the region in the Lok Sabha polls.

A senior Congress leader from Jammu told this newspaper that time has come for the party to change the strategy to check BJP's growing influence in the Hindu belt of Jammu.

"If you see the Assembly poll results, Congress is a force in the Hindu belt after BJP. Our candidates received votes in thousands, but we missed the opportunity," he said. "Congress needs to find ways to counter BJP's pro-Hindutva agenda. We have to adopt a soft Hindutva policy to counter BJP," the leader said.

He said one does not have to become communal or fundamentalist but "we have to talk on religious point as well."

If you see the Assembly poll results, Congress is a force in the Hindu belt after BJP. Our candidates received votes in thousands, but we missed the opportunity

A senior Congress leader

The BJP, he said, is taking undue advantage of pro-Hindutva politics in Jammu. "We have to do something to prevent them from doing so. We cannot give them a free hand and cannot leave that space," he said.

Another Congress leader said BJP is raking religion during the polls and "our party has to counter it by not shying away from talking on religious points. We have to counter the BJP on every front including the Hindutva front."

The Congress has formed a fact-finding team to assess the reason for the party's poor show in J&K Assembly polls.

RANCHI DIARY

MUKESH RANJAN
Our correspondent in Jharkhand
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500 CM Schools of Excellence in next 5 years

500 CM Schools of Excellence will be opened in Jharkhand in five years. According to School Education Minister Ramdas Soren, there are 80 such schools in the state, which will be increased to 160 in the next two years. To end the discrimination in the education system, government has planned to give the opportunity to the poor children to study in English medium as well, he said. The aim is to provide CBSE-recognized English medium education to poor students. After this, there will be a big change in the education system of the state and poor children will also become eligible for jobs in the country and abroad.

CID probe into JSSC paper leak case

After the intervention of CM Hemant Soren, the personnel and administrative department on issued a detailed order for a CID probe on Saturday. According to the order, the investigation of the irregularities in the JSSC-CGL examination has been handed over to the CID. The order stated that the JSSC conducted this examination on September 21-22, 2024. Nearly 3.04 lakh candidates appeared in this examination at 823 centres in the state. At the same time, its result was released on December 4.

JKLM accused of getting foreign funds

Jharkhand Loktantrik Krantikari Morcha (JKLM) has been accused of raising funds through foreign funding during 2024 Assembly polls. A complaint was made to the Election Commission after which the commission has written a letter to Bokaro Deputy Commissioner directing him to take necessary action. The EC in its letter stated that Rahul Banerjee, a resident of West Bengal, has complained to the State Election Commission through email that JKLM had illegally raised funds through foreign funding, which was used in the Assembly elections. It has also been mentioned in the letter that most of the foreign money was brought from Saudi Arabia.

DSP linked to Bishnoi interview may be dismissed

HARPREET BAJWA @ Chandigarh

A Deputy Superintendent of Police, a key conspirator who allegedly facilitated an interview with incarcerated gangster Lawrence Bishnoi for a private news channel, is expected to be dismissed from his position.This recommendation for dismissal has come from the Home Department of the Punjab Government based on the findings of a special investigation team (SIT).

Sources indicate that DSP Gursher Singh was dismissed based on the SIT's findings which was headed by Special DGP (Human Rights) Pramod Kumar. The interview was broadcast in March 2023 while Bishnoi was in custody at the CIA Kharar on September 3 and 4, 2022.

The interview coincided with the first anniversary of the death of singer Sidhu Moosewala. Balkaur Singh Sidhu, father of the deceased singer, had alleged police to be hand in glove with the gangster, which the SIT found to be true.

At that time, Singh served as the DSP (Investigations), and Bishnoi had been brought from Tihar Jail for murder of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala.

Jolt to Dhami as U'khand permanent capital plan fails to clear govt's hurdle

NARENDRA SETHI @ Dehradun

IN a significant setback for Uttarakhand, the Union Ministry of Forest and Environment has revoked its in-principle approval for the establishment of the state assembly, secretariat, and departmental headquarters in the Raipur area of Dehradun, which currently serves as the temporary capital.

Recently, the state government drafted a new proposal following the cancellation of a previous initiative from 2016. Official sources said that the state has already deposited over ₹24 crore with the Centre in anticipation of this project.

However, the Centre placed the project on hold, citing prolonged indecision and inadequate coordination among various government departments.

An official statement noted, "The lack of cohesive planning has hindered progress, necessitating a fresh proposal from the state."

Notably, the government identified 59.90 hectares of land in the Raipur area of Dehradun in 2012 to construct an assembly and secretariat. In 2016, the state deposited approximately ₹8.50 crore as Net Present Value with the Centre, which subsequently granted in-principle approval for the proposal.

Vinod Kumar Suman, the Nodal Officer for the initiative and Secretary of Revenue for the Uttarakhand government told TNIE, "The proposal for the land transfer has been restructured. It will soon be uploaded onto the portal. Following that, decisions regarding the subsequent processes will be made at the appropriate levels."

According to sources from the Revenue Department, "In this context, ₹15 crore has been deposited into the Government's CAMPA fund for the proposed new assembly site under the Elephant Corridor (Wildlife Mitigation Plan). Further amounts have been deposited across various heads. In total, over ₹24 crore has been provided to the Centre on behalf of the state."

Despite this substantial contribution, the proposal was rejected, causing a significant setback to the government.

Shah praises C'garh police on Maoist 'surrender policy'

EJAZ KAISER @ New Delhi

UNION home minister Amit Shah on Sunday conferred the Chhattisgarh police with the 'President's Colour' award in recognition for 24 years of "exemplary service and unwavering dedication to the nation."

On the occasion, Shah appealed to Maoists to surrender. He called upon the extremists "to relinquish violence, join the mainstream of the society and contribute towards development of the country." He said Chhattisgarh has the most attractive surrender policy to rehabilitate the Maoists.

Shah said the BJP government is committed to getting rid of Maoists by March 31, 2026. "Chhattisgarh police moved ahead with immense success in the battle against the Left-wing extremists. In one year, 287 Maoist cadres have been neutralised, 992 arrested and 837 surrendered," he said.

Shah said the figures show how the fight against the LWE got expedited with the change of government in Chhattisgarh. "I congratulate Chhattisgarh police who in coordination with central paramilitary forces surpassed all other states to hit a final nail in the coffin of Maoists," he said.

CM Vishnu Deo Sai said, "The President's Colour honour is a testament to the courage, discipline, and patriotism of the Chhattisgarh police."

Later in the evening, Shah attended the closing ceremony of Bastar Olympics 2024 that he cited as a ray of hope for the seven Maoist-affected districts of Bastar division in coming years. "Such sports events will script a success story for Bastar region, which is changing for the better. The constructive energy of Bastar Olympics will prevent lakhs of youth from taking a wrong path and connect them with nation-building activities," he said.

"The country knows that of the medals India won in any sports competition, half of them were secured by our tribal youths," Shah said. The home minister will have an overnight stay in Bastar. On Monday he is scheduled to review the strategies for fight against the LWEs.

Child rights body's parental control on X-mas

ANURAAG SINGH @ Bhopal

AHEAD of Christmas Day, Madhya Pradesh Child Rights Commission wrote to the government and all district collectors saying parents' written consent is necessary for participation of students in events, playing particular roles and wearing specific attires at those events.

The MP child right panel wrote to the state government and all district collectors to ensure that all schools compulsorily get the consent of respective parents for their ward's participation at various events in schools.

"Written consent of parents' for participation of their wards' at events in schools must be ensured to prevent any untoward incident. If there is any complaint, action will be initiated against the school/educational institution concerned under the relevant laws and rules," read the letter by state child rights panel member Anurag Pandey on December 12.

The development happened two weeks before Christmas, when many schools across the state organized events, including fancy dress competitions.

"This has nothing to do with any particular religion or festival. It is to ensure that children from one religious community are not made to play roles or wear costumes of another community without the consent of their parents. It will ensure school students are not made to perform on any obscene song or objectionable sequence. This is purely a precautionary measure to prevent any discord and untoward incident in the society," Anurag Pandey said.

Ahead of Christmas Day celebrations in 2023, a controversy erupted in western MP's Shajapur district over an order issued by the district education officer (DEO).

The order had mentioned that participation of students at Christmas related events, including dressing them or making them enact roles, like the Santa Claus and Xmas Tree, will only be allowed after the written consent of parents to prevent any untoward situation.

In August this year, the communally sensitive Ratlam district of west MP, had witnessed protests by RSS's student wing ABVP's activists, over a little girl student holding the Pakistani flag while enacting the role of Bharat Mata (Mother India) at a play in a private school on Independence Day.

What happened

Ahead of Christmas Day celebrations in 2023, a controversy erupted in western MP's Shajapur district over an order issued by the DEO. The order had mentioned that participation of students at Christmas related events, including dressing them or making them enact roles will only be allowed after the written consent of parents to prevent any untoward situation. In August this year, the communally sensitive Ratlam district, had witnessed protests by ABVP's activists, over a little girl student holding the Pakistani flag while enacting the role of Bharat Mata (Mother India) at a play in a private school on Independence Day.

NDA slams Tejashwi's sops to women, flags 'one family rule' of Lalu & Rabri

RAMASHANKAR @ Patna

BIHAR Leader of Opposition Tejashwi Prasad Yadav's announcement of a cash transfer scheme for women under the 'Mai-Behan Maan Yojna' has created a political storm in the state, with ruling NDA leaders making a scathing attack on him on Sunday.

The NDA leaders assailed the RJD leader by reminding him of the 15-year-Lalu-Rabri regime when women were pushed to the back burner.

Deputy Chief Minister and BJP leader Samrat Choudhary said that people had witnessed the 15-year rule of Lalu-Rabri, so they will avoid repeating the same mistake in the upcoming assembly elections due next year. He added that Tejashwi was trying to woo the voters by making promises ahead of the assembly polls, but people knew his game plan.

Taking a jibe at Tejashwi, union minister and Lok Janshakti Party (RV) chief Chirag Paswan said that the LoP earlier talked about MY (Muslim-Yadav), and now he is talking about cash transfer schemes for women of Bihar. "In the 1990s, only one family (Lalu-Rabri) ruled the state, but they never discussed women's empowerment. "Tejashwi is now trying to befool people by making such promises, but he will not succeed," he said.

Former union minister and Rajya Sabha member Upendra Kushwaha said that the RJD leader's monthly announcement to give ₹2,500 to eligible women has lost its relevance. "What contributions have they made for women's empowerment in the state?" he asked and said they should be ashamed of making such hollow promises.

Union minister and senior JD(U) leader Rajiv Ranjan Singh, alias Lalan Singh, said that Tejashwi was making such announcements to win over the women before the state assembly elections.

"He knows that he will not become the chief minister after the 2025 assembly polls as NDA is going to make a clean sweep," he added.

Women-centric scheme

Tejashwi announced that if the RJD wins the assembly elections and assumes power, his govt will provide ₹2,500 per month to the bank accounts of economically disadvantaged women under the 'Mai-Behan Maan Yojna.' It aims to help women manage their households more effectively. With rising inflation making it increasingly challenging for women, the scheme will support them in their domestic work.

Five
Migrants dead off Greece coast

GLOBAL WEATHER
LR: Light Rain • HR: Heavy Rain • TDS: Thundershower • LC: Light Cloud • SNY: Sunny

Beijing	7	-2	SNY	Los Angeles	22	7	SNY
Colombo	28	27	LR	Melbourne	38	18	SNY
Dhaka	27	16	SNY	Moscow	-1	-2	LS
Dubai	25	18	SNY	New York	9	9	LR
Houston	26	19	SNY	Singapore	31	26	SNY
Istanbul	10	6	SNY	Toronto	7	4	LR
London	11	8	LC	Washington	9	6	LR

Blinken says US in contact with Syrian rebels

Secy of State refuses to divulge details but says he has conveyed the message to HTS that it is being watched

AQABA

AMERICAN officials have been in direct contact with the terrorist-designated rebel group that led the overthrow of Syrian President Bashar Assad, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Saturday.

Blinken, speaking at a news conference in Jordan, was the first US official to publicly confirm contacts between the Biden administration and Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, or HTS, which led a coalition of armed opposition groups that drove Assad from power and into asylum in Russia last weekend.

Along with counterparts from eight Arab nations and Turkey and senior officials from the European Union and United Nations, Blinken signed off on a set of principles meant to guide Syria's transition to a peaceful, nonsectarian and inclusive country.

Blinken would not discuss details of the direct contacts with HTS but said it was important for the US to convey messages to the group about its conduct and how it intends to govern in a transition period.

"Yes, we have been in contact with HTS and with other parties," Blinken said in the port city of Aqaba.

He added that "our message to the Syrian people is this: We want them to succeed and we're prepared to help them do so."

HTS, once an affiliate of al-Qaida, has been designed as a foreign terrorist organisation by the US State Department since 2018. That designation carries severe sanctions, including a ban on the provision of any "material support" to the group or its members.

The sanctions do not, however, legally bar US officials from communicating with designated groups.

In an interview Saturday on Syrian television, the group's leader, Ahmad al-Sharaa, formerly known as Abu Mohammed al-Golani, did not address any direct contact with the United States, but said the new authorities in Damascus are in touch with Western embassies. He also said that "we don't intend to enter any conflict because there is general exhaustion in Syria."

HTS has worked to establish security and start a political transition after seizing Damascus and has tried to reassure a public both stunned by Assad's fall and concerned about extremist jihadis among the rebels. Insurgent leaders say the group has broken with its extremist past.

Blinken also stressed that "the success that we've had in ending the territorial caliphate" of the Islamic State group remains "a critical mission." And citing the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces, the Kurdish fighters who in recent years drove IS out of large areas of Syria, he called it "very important at this moment that they continue that role because this is a moment of instability" in which IS "will seek to regroup and take advantage of."

A joint statement after the meeting of foreign ministers urged all parties to cease hostilities in Syria and expressed support for a locally led transitional political process. It called for preventing the reemergence of extremist groups and ensuring the security and safe destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles. *AP*

Turkey's foreign minister Hakan Fidan, left, Antony Blinken, UAE's Sheikh Abdullah and Saudi's Prince Faisal in Jordan | AP

Rep senate leader asks Kennedy's stand on polio vax

WASHINGTON

SENATE Republican leader Mitch McConnell, a childhood polio survivor, said any of President-elect Donald Trump's nominees seeking confirmation should "steer clear" of efforts to discredit the polio vaccine. "Efforts to undermine public confidence in proven cures are not just uninformed — they're dangerous," McConnell said in a Friday statement. "Anyone seeking the Senate's consent to serve in the incoming Administration would do well to steer clear of even the appearance of association with such efforts."

The 82-year-old lawmaker's statement appeared to be directed at Trump's nominee for health secretary, Robert F. Kennedy Jr, after a report that one of his advisors filed a petition to revoke approval for the polio vaccine in 2022. It was a sign that Kennedy, who has long advanced the debunked idea that vaccines cause autism, could face resistance in the soon-to-be GOP-controlled Senate. "Mr Kennedy believes the Polio Vaccine should be available to the public and thoroughly and properly studied," said Katie Miller, the transition spokeswoman for Kennedy, in response to questions.

The New York Times reported on Friday that a lawyer who is helping Kennedy select candidates for health official positions filed a petition to get the government to revoke its approval of the polio vaccine — widely considered to have halted the disease in most parts of the world — and pause distribution of several other vaccines. *The Washington Post* also confirmed the petition.

Vaccines have been proven to be safe and effective in laboratory testing and in real-world use in hundreds of millions of people over decades — they are considered among the most effective public health measures in history. McConnell contracted polio at 2 years old but survived, he said on Friday, because of "the miraculous combination of modern medicine and a mother's love." He praised the "saving power" of the polio vaccine for the "millions who came after me." *AP*

Closeness to royal member, meeting ex-PMs by Chinese spy rock Britain

LONDON

THE scandal surrounding an alleged Chinese spy who managed to gain access to Buckingham Palace as a "close confidant" of Prince Andrew, the younger brother of King Charles III, intensified on Sunday as it emerged that he also met former prime ministers David Cameron and Theresa May.

While Cameron and May distanced themselves from any knowledge of his espionage links, the row involving the businessman, known only as 'H6' for legal reasons, continues to dominate the headlines after a tribunal judge noted that he had an "unusual" degree of trust from the senior royal.

Earlier, Andrew, the Duke of York, said in a statement that he had 'ceased all contact' with the alleged spy.

"David Cameron was leader of the Conservative Party for over a decade and PM for six years. He met thousands of people during that time at hundreds of functions and events. We don't have any further information about this individual," a source close to Cameron, now Lord Cameron, was quoted as saying by *Sky News*.

Meanwhile, a spokesperson for Theresa May said "as such, she doesn't remember when or where this particular photograph was taken or the man in question". The revelations come after it emerged earlier this week that H6 had been barred from entering the UK due to national security risks. A Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC) went on to hear in July that the man was invited to Prince Andrew's birthday party in 2020 and was told by a royal aide that he could act on the Duke's behalf when dealing with potential investors in China.

According to SIAC case details, H6 was first excluded from entering the country in 2023 over national security fears by Suella Braverman, who was then home secretary. In July last year, the Home Office said H6 was considered to have engaged in "covert and deceptive activity" on behalf of the Chinese Communist Party. H6 denied the allegations and appealed that decision in the SIAC, which ruled against him on Thursday.

Prince Andrew's office said the Duke had met the man and there was "nothing of a sensitive nature ever discussed". *PTI*

ASIA MATTERS

FIVE AUSSIES RETURN AFTER 19 YRS IN JAIL

The five remaining members of the Australian "Bali Nine" drug ring flew home on Sunday after 19 years in jail in Indonesia, ending a saga that had frayed relations between the two countries. "The Australian Government can confirm that Australian citizens, Matthew Norman, Scott Rush, Martin Stephens, Si Yi Chen, and Michael Czugaj have returned to Australia," Canberra said in a statement. "The men will have the opportunity to continue their personal rehabilitation and reintegration in Australia." Australian PM thanked Indonesian President for his "compassion". *AFP*

MINISTER TO LEAVE PARTY, JOIN ANWAR'S

Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Zafrul Aziz is in talks to leave Umno and join Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR), in a move that could strain ties between the two allies in Malaysia's unity government, *The Straits Times* reported. On Dec 15, Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, who is PKR's president, confirmed the talks to join the party. "As a principle, we maintain an open stance – anyone who can contribute to the party is welcome, but the entry must be done properly to ensure our relationships with other parties, including Umno, (remain unaffected)," Anwar said.

LOW-VOTER TURNOUT FEARED IN POLLS

The Election Commission expressed concern over low voter turnout estimates for the nationwide election of Provincial Administrative Organisation members to be held on Feb 1, *BP* reported. "The number of voters is expected to be low, but more than 50% of those eligible [to vote]," said EC secretary-general Sawaeng Boonmee.

Israel decides to close embassy in Ireland

Israel announced on Sunday that it was closing its embassy in Ireland, citing the Dublin government's "extreme anti-Israeli policies", further straining tense relations between the two nations. Diplomatic ties between Ireland and Israel have deteriorated after a series of moves that included Ireland recognising a Palestinian state and backing an International Court of Justice case accusing Israel of "genocide" in the Gaza Strip. Ireland has also been among the most outspoken critics of Israel's response to Hamas attack

WAR WATCH
ISRAEL-GAZA: DAY 436

TOLL SO FAR
46,880

Opposition members in Venezuela complain of lack of water, power

CARACAS

MEMBERS of Venezuela's political opposition who have been sheltering for months in the Argentine diplomatic compound in the capital on Saturday detailed their deteriorating living conditions as they sought to grow a sense of urgency among the governments working to secure their safe departure from their country.

Their comments to reporters via an online news conference came three days after Argentina's government urged the Organisation of American States to pressure Venezuela to allow the safe passage of the six members of the opposition living at the ambassador's residence. The harassment, according to those who spoke to reporters, includes constant surveillance by heavily armed security agents, the interruption of water and electric services, and this week's arrest of a longtime local employee of the Argentine embassy.

"We are seeing how the process of violating our basic human rights is accelerating, and it is urgent to be able to stop this situation of control and repression against us, whether psychological or real," said Magalli Meda, campaign manager of opposition powerhouse María Corina Machado.

Venezuela's Minister of Interior Diosdado Cabello last week called the group's allegations a "farce." Brazil's ambassador to the OAS, Benoni Belli, said the safe passage has been the subject of negotiations. *AP*

A police patrol car sits parked outside Argentina's embassy in Caracas | AP

EXPRESS READ

11 people killed in Mayotte after cyclone

At least 11 people have died after Cyclone Chido caused devastating damage in the French territory of Mayotte in the Indian Ocean, France's Interior Ministry said on Sunday. The ministry said it was proving difficult to get a precise tally of the dead and injured amid fears the death toll will increase. A hospital in Mayotte reported that nine people were in critical condition and 246 others injured

GOVT. OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS CIRCLE: KEONJHAR
eMail : se_nerwkjr@rediffmail.com
eProcurement Notice for Road Works under MMSY -CMRL & SACI
Bid Identification No. NCB-19 /RWCKJR / 2024-25
0-874 No. 3663 / Date: 11.12.2024 /

1. Name of the work :- Construction and Maintenance of roads under MMSY -CMRL & SACI in the District of Keonjhar.
2. No. of work :- 08 (Eight) Nos.
3. Estimated Cost :- As per Annexure in NIT.
4. Class of contractor (Eligible) :- As per Annexure in NIT.
5. Period of completion :- As per Annexure in NIT.
6. Other details :-

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender On-line for bidding		Last Date & Time of seeking Tender Clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender in O/O C.C.E.R.W. Circle, Keonjhar	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Keonjhar	NCB-19/ RWCKJR/ 2024-25	Dt.21.12.24 at 11.00 A.M.	Dt.04.01.25 upto 5.00 P.M.	Dt.03.01.25 up to 5.00 P.M.	Dt.06.01.25 at 11.00 A.M.	Will be intimated later

• Further details can be seen from the website: www.tendersorissa.gov.in
OIPR- 25177/11/0023/2425 Sd/- Chief Construction Engineer, R.W. Circle, Keonjhar

FEDBANK FINANCIAL SERVICES LTD. AUCTION NOTICE

This is to inform the public at large, that FEDBANK FINANCIAL SERVICES LTD., has decided to conduct Auction of Gold ornaments belonging to accounts (mentioned below) which have become overdue or which have defaults or margin breach customers. The Auction would be held at respective Branches specified below on **Friday 27-12-2024 between 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.** This would continue till the auction process is over.

Anekal 8884114481 **FEDGL0088**0005432, 0006654, 0006736 **Arakalgud** 9964260350 **FEDGL0036**0013081, 0013123, 0014330, 0014456, 0014466, 0014471 **Arasikere** 9620276545 **FEDGL0414**0004300, 0004313, 0004339, 0004379, 0005445 **B H Road** 8904344610 **FEDGL0103**0019363, 0015272, 0019362, 0019364 **BASAVESHWARA NAGAR** 9036935453 **FEDGL0011**0012124, 0012130, 0012152, 0012178, 0012180, 0012880, 0012882 **BELGAUM** 9538166084 **FEDGL0136**0006647, 0006658, 0006689, 0006711, 0006712, 0006714, 0007696 **BELUR** 9483265538 **FEDGL0159**0011241, 0011246, 0011258, 0011287, 0011307, 0011309, 0011325, 0012335 **BOMMANAHALLI** 8555046900 **FEDGL0014**0008513, 0008531, 0008558, 0008562, 0008572 **BTM LAYOUT** 9980764782 **FEDGL0003**0006854, 0006859, 0006860, 0006861 **BYADGI** 8970590276 **FEDGL0051**0012046, 0012068, 0012076, 0012077, 0012084, 0012097, 0012111, 0012115, 0012128, 0013436, 0013438, 0013480, 0014132 **Caltex Circle** 9900291944 **FEDGL0102**0017133, 0013444, 0013463, 0013468, 0013501, 0013518, 0017131, 0017134 **Car Street Bellary** 9535205038 **FEDGL0092**0004598, 0004635, 0004642, 0005420, 0005430 **CHANNAPATNA** 9743172738 **FEDGL0176**0020067, 0020075, 0020091, 0020112, 0020114, 0020121 **CHENRAYAPATNA** 9739489738 **FEDGL0158**0023184, 0023186, 0023194, 0023230, 0023239 **CHIKKAMAGALUR** 9164264697 **FEDGL0021**0008220, 0008249, 0009011 **DAVANGERE** 8792107472 **FEDGL0229**0009937, 0010592 **dharwad** 8152913405 **FEDGL0233**0006350 **Gadag** 9902373905 **FEDGL0420**0004847, 0004865, 0004870 **Gangavathi** 9972317836 **FEDGL0094**0005606, 0006360, 0006388 **Gubbi** 7760812077 **FEDGL0046**0015257, 0015276, 0015285, 0015308, 0015335, 0015359, 0015426, 0017754, 0017911, 0017913 **Gundalpete** 9916977750 **FEDGL0383**0004258, 0005400, 0005474 **H D Kote** 8147199881 **FEDGL0058**0012399, 0010053, 0010058, 0011459, 0012360, 0012398 **Hagaribommanhalli** 9481555371 **FEDGL0100**0010942, 0010945, 0011016, 0012521, 0012618, 0013384 **HANSUR** 9880376563 **FEDGL0162**0019043, 0019023, 0017590, 0019053, 0018918, 0019022, 0018919, 0019024 **Harappanahalli** 9945998329 **FEDGL0104**0010384, 0010385, 0010392, 0010393, 0010453 **HARIHAR** 8147533256 **FEDGL0022**0014841, 0014844, 0014886, 0015773, 0015777, 0015799, 0015805, 0015835 **HASSAN MARKET** 8970429398 **FEDGL0157**0014271, 0014276, 0014312, 0014354, 0014411, 0014419, 0016133 **HAVERI** 8880914476 **FEDGL0181**0011404, 0011406 **HENNUR** 8123668156 **FEDGL0015**0005043, 0005049, 0005067 **Holenarsipura** 9591033235 **FEDGL0059**0022805, 0022822, 0022833, 0022847, 0022848, 0022863, 0022869, 0022877, 0022887, 0022888, 0022890, 0022901, 0022913, 0022920, 0022952, 0022965, 0022966, 0022976, 0022984 **HOSA ROAD** 8050825082 **FEDGL0002**0013956, 0013981, 0015721, 0015785, 0015795, 0015796 **Hosadurga** 8105000953 **FEDGL0412**0005295, 0005311, 0005356, 0005358, 0005368 **Hospet** 9743956995 **FEDGL0099**0010550, 0010570, 0008607, 0008628, 0008643, 0008645, 0008650, 0008671, 0009861, 0009862, 0009882, 0009903, 0010549, 0010568, 0010551 **JEEVAN BHEEMA NAGAR** 8310238326 **FEDGL0019**0003813 0004375 **K R NAGAR** 9901175713 **FEDGL0161**0014161, 0014168, 0012804, 0012819, 0012871, 0012879, 0012883, 0013721, 0013746, 0013779, 0014160, 0014167 **K R Pete** 9880106025 **FEDGL0063**0010282, 0008597, 0008640, 0010281 **K R PURAM** 8553393114 **FEDGL0012**0014667, 0014668, 0014669 **K R ROAD** 7829541516 **FEDGL0037**0006327, 0006338, 0006339, 0006346, 0006367, 0006377, 0006942, 0006949, 0006989, 0006999 **Kadur** 9164240747 **FEDGL0487**0005325, 0003701, 0004727, 0004746, 0004758, 0005324, 0005326, 0005327 **KAMMANAHALLI** 9620444393 **FEDGL0005**0005204, 0005213, 0005214, 0005231, 0005836, 0005837, 0005845, 0005858, 0005877 **Kampli** 9945966143 **FEDGL0095**0010494, 0008550, 0008560, 0008600, 0008613, 0008620, 0008621, 0008633, 0008637, 0008641, 0009817, 0009841, 0009864, 0009871, 0010546, 0010562, 0010491 **FEDBD0095**0000072 **Kappogal Road Bellary** 7795211906 **FEDGL0093**0005002 **KOPIKAR ROAD** 8792207075 **FEDGL0155**0008428, 0009150, 0009163, 0009167, 0009182, 0009214 **Koppal** 9980073958 **FEDGL0403**0002921, 0002962, 0002973, 0003891 **Kudligi** 7760491423 **FEDGL0404**0005649, 0005665, 0005676, 0005682, 0005702, 0005711, 0005717, 0005723, 0005736, 0005753, 0005756, 0005760, 0007317, 0007324, 0007325, 0007336, 0007432, 0007473 **KUnigal** 9738833176 **FEDGL0121**0010164, 0010194, 0010212, 0010242, 0012042, 0012111, 0012152 **Madhugiri** 9972981737 **FEDGL0393**0011262, 0007381, 0007426, 0007454, 0007456, 0007496, 0011260, 0011263 **Malavalli** 9742509190 **FEDGL0365**0005840, 0005845, 0006897 **Malebennur** 8884276416 **FEDGL0062**0012131, 0012166, 0012167 **MANDIMOHALLA** 9945657838 **FEDGL0174**0010306 **MANDYA** 8453194687 **FEDGL0163**0008720, 0008723, 0008729, 0009517 **FEDDS0163**0000003, 0000004 **Mundargi** 9886453768 **FEDGL0064**0009496, 0009506, 0009507, 0009510, 0009512, 0009516, 0009528, 0009534, 0009549, 0010944, 0011003 **NANJANGODE** 9611312789 **FEDGL0160**0014820, 0014833, 0014857, 0014867 **Nelamangala** 9108850892 **FEDGL0392**0003180, 0003187, 0003950, 0003956, 0004048 **Pavagada** 9448386998 **FEDGL0377**0012655, 0012582, 0012646, 0009242, 0009253, 0009256, 0009258, 0009269, 0009277, 0009285, 0009295, 0009299, 0009303, 0009329, 0009374, 0009378, 0009386, 0011347, 0011474, 0011523, 0012624, 0012578, 0012644, 0012654, 0012656 **Periapatna** 9449955714 **FEDGL0044**0009659, 0011023 **RAJAJI NAGAR** 7892077716 **FEDGL0004**0005254 **Ramamurthy Nagar** 9379513202 **FEDGL0035**0002658, 0002669, 0002675 **RAMANAGARA** 8197884697 **FEDGL0180**0024454, 0026138, 0026219 **RAMASWAMY CIRCLE** 9620136356 **FEDGL0173**0008250, 0008279, 0008282 **RANEBENNUR** 9538782603 **FEDGL0232**0011482, 0011483, 0011487, 0011491, 0011530, 0012530, 0012547, 0012561, 0012589, 0012594 **SHIMOGA** 9513242321 **FEDGL0183**0013394 **Sindhanur** 8880890891 **FEDGL0461**0003251, 0003289, 0003304 **Sira** 9686864110 **FEDGL0376**0013228, 0013281, 0013267, 0009382, 0009391, 0009400, 0009425, 0009430, 0009431, 0009453, 0009507, 0009508, 0009526, 0009527, 0011860, 0011884, 0011917, 0011930, 0013227, 0013265, 0013278, 0013232, 0013282 **SIRSI** 9449790043 **FEDGL0193**0007823, 0007827, 0007833, 0007841, 0007846, 0007849, 0007850 **SULTHANPLYA** 9353708159 **FEDGL0013**0006088, 0007105, 0007121, 0007156, 0007158, 0007164 **Tiptur** 9739894909 **FEDGL0047**0012031, 0009881, 0009895, 0012030, 0012033 **Turuvekere** 9964345178 **FEDGL0386**0005790, 0005876

Change in Venue or Date, if any will be displayed on our Website www.fedfina.com. All bidders participating will be intimated subsequently with respect to acceptance or rejection of bids submitted by them. Customer who want to release their ornaments shall visit at the base branch wherein the ornaments were pledged by the customer or contact at the number mentioned above on/or before 26-12-2024 subject to the terms and condition applicable.

Auction will be conducted at respective branches, in case the auction does not get completed on the given date due to any reasons, the auction in respect thereto shall be conducted on subsequent working days at district level branch after displaying the details on our Website. No further communication shall be issued in this regard.

Dated : 16-12-2024 **For, sd/- Authorised Signatory**
Place : Karnataka **Fedbank Financial Services Ltd.,**

बैंक ऑफ़ बड़ौदा Bank of Baroda
Bank of Baroda Brigade Road Branch
41/2, Ground Floor, Vijaya Tower, M G Road, Trinity Circle, Bengaluru-560001.

NOTICE TO BORROWER/GUARANTORS
(UNDER SUB-SECTION (2) OF SECTION 13 OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002)

At your request, Bank has extended credit facilities to the below mentioned individuals against secured assets through its **Bank of Baroda, Brigade Road Branch.** The relevant particulars of the property on which you have created security interest by execution of security agreement/documents & creation of mortgage by way deposit of title deeds are furnished hereunder. As the operation and conduct of the financial assistance/ credit facilities have become irregular, the debts have been classified as Non Performing Assets in accordance with the directives/guidelines issued by Reserve Bank of India consequent to the default committed by the borrowers in repayment of the principal debt and interest thereon. As the demand notice sent by register AD calling upon you, was unserved/not acknowledged, this publication is now issued.

1.Name and Address of the Borrowers/Co-Borrowers/Mortgagors/Guarantors: 1) Ms. SUGUNA K, # 30, Ward No.55, 2nd Main Road, Dattatreya Nagar, Hosakerehalli, BSK 3rd Stage, Bengaluru- 560085. **2) Ms. SUGUNA K, M/s Rahul Enterprises,** Ground Floor, 849, 4th Main Road, Kalidasanagar, Hosakerehalli, BSK 3rd Stage, Bengaluru-560085. **3) Mrs. SELVI.G. KRISHNA** # 30, Ward No.55, 2nd Main Road, Dattatreya Nagar, Hosakerehalli, BSK 3rd Stage, Bengaluru-560085. **4) Ms. SUGUNA K, M/s Rahul Enterprises,** #30, Ward No. 55, 2nd Main Road, Dattatreya Nagar, Hosakerehalli, BSK 3rd Stage, Bengaluru-560085.

Nature and type of facility	Limit (Rs. in lacs)	Rate of Interest	O/s as on 10.11.2024 (inclusive of interest upto 09.11.2024)
Housing Loan 06650600006394	Rs. 12,00,000	9.95% (As on Date)	Rs.11,52,683.26 (Rupees Eleven Lakh Fifty Two Thousand Six Hundred Eighty Three and Twenty Six Paisa Only) plus interest and other charges from date of NPA
DL/TL GEN COMP-NON EMI 06650600008104	Rs. 3,00,000	11.35% (As on Date)	Rs 3,02,832.28 (Rupees Three Lakh Two Thousand Eight Hundred Thirty Two and Twenty Eight Paise Only) plus interest and other charges from date of NPA

Outstanding Amount : Rs. 11,52,683.26 (Rupees Eleven Lakh Fifty Two Thousand Six Hundred Eighty Three and Twenty Six Paisa Only) plus interest and other charges from date of NPA and **Rs 3,02,832.28** (Rupees Three Lakh Two Thousand Eight Hundred Thirty Two and Twenty Eight Paise Only) plus interest and other charges from Date of NPA.

NPA Date : 09.11.2024 **Demand Notice Date : 16.11.2024**

Security agreement with brief description of securities:

All that piece and parcel of the immovable Residential Property bearing Khata No.27, old No.30/5, southern portion of site No.30 carved out of survey No.5, Ward No.55 within limits of Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, Banashankari 3rd Stage, Bengaluru - 560085, measuring East to West 40 feet and North to South 15 feet, totally measuring 600 sq. ft. along with the residential building constructed thereon with Ground, First and Second Floors having built up area of 1,275 sq. ft. Bounded on the: East by: Site No.38, West by: 20 feet Road, North by : Northern portion of Site No.30, South by : Site No.29.

If you fail to repay the aforesaid sum with interest and incidental expenses within 60 days from the date of this notice, Bank shall exercise all or any of the rights detailed under sub section (4) of the section 13 of the SARFAESI Act. You are also put on notice that in terms of sub section 13 of section 13, you shall not transfer by sale, lease or otherwise the said secured assets detailed above without obtaining written consent of the Bank. This notice is without prejudice to the Banks rights to initiate such other action or legal proceedings as it deem necessary under any other applicable provisions of law.

Date : 13.12.2024 **Sd/- Authorised Officer**
Place : Bengaluru **Bank of Baroda**

Withdrawal of EPF from ATM may take time

Though there are plans to ease the claims process, the idea of withdrawal of EPF claims via ATM is at an early stage

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

THE plan for allowing withdrawal of employee provident fund (EPF) claims through ATM has a long way to go. Labour ministry sources have said that this is just an idea floated by the labour minister, and it needs a lot of deliberations between the labour ministry, EPFO and the banking regulator before it could be implemented.

The idea is to have a hassle-free claim settlement process as high rejection rates are becoming a headache for individuals, who keep their life savings with EPFO (Employee Provident Fund Organisations) for use after retirements or during emergency fund requirements. However, the idea of allowing EPFO members to withdraw from ATM is not happening in the immediate future. The ministry has a vision to ease the claims process, and the idea is at a very early stage, says a labour ministry source. "Without the approval of the RBI, the banking regulator, the idea cannot be implemented. Besides, there are other several issues like frequency and limit of withdrawal that the EPFO needs to figure out before going ahead with the project," the labour ministry source told TNIE.

The ministry is also exploring the possibility of introducing a digital wallet, where the claimed amount could be kept and withdrawn from. "These ideas, including issuing ATM cards, cannot be implemented without a strong backing from the banking regulator and banks," the ministry source said, adding that anything like this is not possible in the immediate future.

Improving digital infra

The EPFO has been trying to improve its digital infrastructure and ease the claims process. Early this year, the EPFO implemented the first of the six modules of Central IT System (CITS) 2.01. This facility will reduce the time and effort while providing facilities such as online submission of application, validation of applications and transfer of past accumulations of the member. CITS 2.01 will replace the earlier system of physical submission with voluminous documents and allow the establishment to track its application with a tracking ID. More modules of CITS 2.01 are likely to be implemented from 1 January 2025.

The EPFO has reduced the rejection of claims to 25% till November 2024. In 2022-23, the combined rejection and return ratio was 34%, while in the year before, the claim rejections had touched 35%. Claims are rejected when the claimant is not eligible for the type of advance or withdrawal. Claims are returned if there is any deficiency. Returned claims can be resubmitted after corrections.

The labour ministry has claimed that the implementation of CITS 2.01 has increased the number of claims settled in the current financial year. During 2023-24, EPFO settled 4.45 crore claims for an amount of ₹1.82 lakh crore. In the current financial year, 3.83 crore claims have already been settled for more than ₹1.57 lakh crore, the CBT was informed. In FY25, 1.15 crore claims have been settled in auto mode, whereby requests for withdrawals for education, marriage and medical purposes are settled automatically. The limit for auto claims settlement facility has also been extended to ₹1 lakh from ₹50,000 which has also been extended to advances for housing, marriage and education.

IN CONVERSATION

SHACHINDRA NATH
Vice Chairman and Managing Director, UGRO Capital

We see an explosion of MSME credit this decade: UGRO MD

SHACHINDRA Nath, Vice Chairman and MD, UGRO Capital, a tech-enabled small business loan platform, in an interaction with **Dipak Mondal**, says that the decade will see an explosion of MSME credit. Edited excerpts:

Why do you think South India is such a big market for NBFCs – be it SME finance companies, microfinance or gold loan companies?

Small businesses are an outcome of three things -- one, prospering business, and second is stable governments, which are progressive. The third is the lending culture, the repayment behaviour. So, the repayment behaviour of, say, in Tamil Nadu or Telangana or Karnataka is much better than say a Punjab, UP or MP. Tamil Nadu is a bipolar political state, so it shifts between two parties. But the underlying economy actually continues to grow at a fast pace, irrespective of political dispensation. As for repayment behaviour, people take their loan fairly seriously in the South. I keep saying that India is not one country purely from a lending perspective – South is a different market from the north. But that is now changing.

There is this perception that the government at the Centre is more focused on creating large corporations instead of focusing on small businesses?

MSMEs are the largest employer of the country, after agriculture. And for India to continue growing, or even for the governments to stay in power, they have to provide employment. And that's why MSMEs are important for governments. If you look from 2014 to 2024, every year there have been some or other changes in policy to support MSME. During COVID, the government came up with schemes like an emergency credit line and partial credit guarantee -- all the schemes would support MSME. It was largely small businesses which received support from the government during Covid. There is a massive focus on MSMEs.

MSMEs are the largest employer of the country, after agriculture. And for India to continue growing, or even for the governments to stay in power, they have to provide employment.

What are the factors helping expansion of credit to MSMEs?

Credit to MSME is possible because of formalization. Before demonetisation, MSMEs generated large cash income without any proper formal record of the revenue. With the demonetisation, there has been a psychological shift. People now fear that having too much of income in cash is risky. Then when GST got implemented, it started forcing people to get their turnover side of the data into the formal system. The third factor (helping MSME credit) is democratisation of Indian banking with digital payments. On one side, small businesses are getting formalized, on the other side, lenders have the ability to look at this kind of data, and do credit. And that's why we keep saying that you will see an explosion of credit to MSME in this decade.

Tell us how you have benefitted from this MSME lending focus of the government since your start in 2018?

We started in July 2018, with ₹950 crore capital. From 120 people, we went to almost 1500 people during the pandemic. We went from ₹3,000 crore (in AUM) in 2022 to ₹6,000 crore in 2023, and in 2024, we had ₹9,000 crore. We have now ₹10,000 crore.

Are we worried about the explosion of consumption related credit?

Aspirational Indians are buying more and more goods on credit, and that's why retail consumer credit has grown. But so much consumer credit is not very healthy as people are buying goods they cannot afford. Ultimately it could blow up. Retail credit is also feeding into inflation.

MONEY-WISE

HOW MUCH SHOULD YOU BE INVESTING?

FINANCIAL ADVICE

PV SUBRAMANYAM
writes at www.subramoney.com and has authored the best seller 'Retire Rich - Invest ₹40 a day'

WHEN it comes to saving and investing, people are obsessed with the returns they're going to get on their money! Two factors that determine how much money we end up with are - the amount we put into our savings and investments in the first place and the amount of time we have it there.

For instance, let's suppose that you need to cobble together ₹10 crore over 40 years and you reckon on getting an investment return of 12% per year. If you pop the numbers into excel, you'll see that you have to save a paltry looking ₹7,960 per month.

If you start 10 years later, at the same 12% per year investment return, you'll now have to save a difficult ₹28,000 per month. What if we did fancy to get higher investment return, which would surely get us to our ₹10 crore over 20 years? Well at ₹88,000 this is not easy. What about getting to ₹10 crore in 20 years with a smaller amount and a higher rate or return?

Well, of course anything is possible, but to make up for the missed time, you'd have to almost double your investment returns. In fact, you'd need to get a return of 21% per year to turn ₹28,000 into ₹10 crore in 20 years!

Have a play on excel calculators with your own numbers.

With so little to play with, it's no accident that Equities are considered better long-term investments than other asset classes.

So, plug everything in.....and repeat the process regularly.

Let's go back to the original example where we were expecting a return of 12% per annum and aiming to cobble together ₹10 crore over 40 years.

To do that we set about saving ₹7,960 p.m. Now let's fast-forward to five years from the start and look at two possible scenarios - one good and one not so good.

Scenario 1 - Things go fine!

In the first scenario, we've got a great return of 22% per year. That gives us a pot of investments worth ₹900,000.

Plugging the numbers in, we find we need to save ₹7,000 per month to get us there! That's a fall of ₹960 per month!

Scenario 2 - Things go, not so well

Here, we've got a return of 10% per year. Plugging in the numbers for this scenario, we find that we need to put in ₹9,600, again just a little more than what we have been investing so far.

Either way, it's better than doing nothing

So, by repeating the sums on a regular basis, you can adjust your rate of investing to account for changing circumstances. Ideally, you should probably refresh the rate at which you're adding to your savings and investments on about a once yearly basis.

Where things had worked well for the first five years, you'd be left looking to invest ₹7000 per month. Where things had gone badly, you'd be left investing ₹9,600. If you hadn't started saving at all, though, you'd be left requiring to save an unlikely looking ₹15,300 per month. So, get investing now!

MONEY MATTERS

WHY YOUR MONEY NEEDS YOUR HELP IN 2025

FINANCIAL KNOWLEDGE

RAJAS KELKAR
(The author is editor-in-chief at www.moneyminute.in)

THE idea that you can earn more than you can spend and create an investible surplus every month is riveting. Not many people can achieve that. People generally live beyond their means, spending more than investing. But it is not just about spending alone. You realise that you are struggling to meet commitments made to your future. In most situations, you make commitments to some investments that may be overdone. These are situations when you are overinvested or overinsured.

Over invested

There is a strong affinity towards physical assets in India. Two-thirds of the Indian household wealth is invested in property and gold. Many of you think of these as investments. There is a sense of comfort that physical assets give to you. Many invest in multiple properties to generate a rental income. Considering an average rental yield of less than 1-2%, it is not an investment but just a saving. Do not forget that your investments must generate a return that beats inflation and leaves some money on the table over the years. You will miss out on a stock market rally if your money is largely locked in properties that you do not use. The same applies to the thought about over investment in gold that happens primarily through jewellery.

While gold as an asset class has done well, it cannot be a dominant part of your assets. You must allocate your money in such a way that you have covered adequate bases in the market. The other problem is with individuals not keeping track of their monthly systematic investment plans. Over diversification is unnecessary if the average returns on the Nifty 50 are 13% over 30 years. Assuming the inflation rate stays at 6% over the long-term, a return of 13% can take care of your future needs. You must engage a financial advisor in 2025 if you have not done it yet. Your asset allocation is likely to help you manage your finances better.

Over insured

There is a lot of zeal in the way insurance companies sell life and general insurance to you. Since a lot of your data is floating across credit bureaus and banks, you would be inundated with calls from tele-marketers to secure your family's future or income. You cannot blame companies for reaching out to you. They are merely looking to grow their business. The onus is on you to make the right choices.

A lot of you take up multiple life insurance policies, unit-linked insurance plans or health insurance policies to protect against eventualities. You must evaluate your options carefully. Insurance is a protection against life situations. However, it is not an investment. The primary objective of an insurance company is to keep money to pay you when you or your family need it the most. You pay a premium for that promise and not really to meet your financial goals or beat inflation. Choose a good life insurance plan and a health insurance plan that takes care of most illnesses or emergency care for you and your family. For investments, plans offered by insurance companies are not the only solution. You can invest in index funds or exchange-traded funds, diversified equity funds or own quality company shares. Your financial advisor can help you make sense of all options.

The New Year calls on you to make a resolution. You must invest in knowledge for your own financial security. It is not easy to understand all the investment and insurance products if you are not familiar with finance. You need to try to focus on things that are relevant to you. 'Over investment' and 'over insurance' are not exactly classical personal finance terms. They are behavioural issues.

Corrigendum

The 14th December edition of this paper on Page 10 had carried a story with the headline—No plans of 35% slab yet under GST: MoS Finance. The headline should have read "No decision on 35% slab yet under GST". We regret the error.

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FIIs buy ₹22,766 cr in first two weeks of Dec

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

AFTER selling rigorously for more than two months, foreign investors have again started buying Indian equities. As per data available, they made a net investment of ₹22,766 crore in the first two weeks of December as valuations became attractive and expectations of rate cut by the US Federal Reserve gained momentum.

"The total buy figure including the exchange buying and buying through the 'primary market and others category' stood at ₹22,765 crore as on 13 December. FII buying has triggered a rally in large-caps particularly in banking and IT," said VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services.

"Even though FIIs have turned buyers in December, they have been large sellers,too, on certain days. This indicates that at higher levels, they may again turn sellers since Indian valuations continue to be relatively high compared to other markets. Rising dollar is another concern which might prompt FIIs to sell at higher levels,"'added Kumar. This revival comes after the FIIs pulled out a net ₹21,612 crore in November and ₹94,017 crore in October. Interestingly, September had marked a nine-month high for FPI inflows, with a net investment of ₹57,724 crore, highlighting the volatility in foreign investment trends.

Dixon, Vivo form JV to manufacture smartphones

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

DIXON Technologies and Vivo India on Sunday announced the formation of a joint venture in India for carrying on the business as an original equipment manufacturer (OEM) of electronic devices including smartphones.

Dixon and Vivo India would hold 51% and 49% stake, respectively, in the joint venture entity to be incorporated for this purpose. Neither Dixon nor Vivo India will have any stake in each other. The parties will agree on an optimum structure and the relevant terms and conditions to be set out in the definitive agreements. Dixon in an exchange filing said that the transaction will be subject to execution of such definitive agreements.

Mumbai overcome MP by 5 wickets to clinch SMAT

Mumbai beat Madhya Pradesh by five wickets to clinch the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy in Bengaluru on Sunday. Mumbai were stretched on more than one occasion during the chase of 175, a target MP built around skipper Rajat Patidar's unbeaten 81, but eventually they reached 180 for five in 17.5 overs. **Brief scores:** MP 174/8 in 20 ovs (Patidar 81 n.o) **lost to** Mumbai 180/5 in 17.5 ovs (Suryakumar 48, Suryansh 36 n.o).

Pacer claims second five-wicket haul of the tour but India let Australia off the hook as hosts finish Day 2 with impressive total of 405/7

LONE RANGER BUMRAH

India's Jasprit Bumrah (L) celebrates after dismissing Travis Head on Sunday | AFP

Scoreboard

Australia 1st Innings (28 for no loss o/n): Khawaja c Pant b Bumrah 21; McSweeney c Kohli b Bumrah 9; Labuschagne c Kohli b Nitish Reddy 12; Smith c Rohit b Bumrah 101; Head c Pant b Bumrah 152; Marsh c Kohli b Bumrah 5; Carey batting 45; Cummins c Pant b Siraj 20; Starc batting 7. **Extras:** 33. **Total:** 405/7 in 101 ovs. **FoWs:** 31-1, 38-2, 75-3, 316-4, 326-5, 327-6, 385-7. **Bowling:** Bumrah 25-7-72-5, Siraj 22.2-4-97-1, Akash Deep 24.4-5-78-0, Nitish Reddy 13-1-65-1, Jadeja 16-2-76-0.

JASPRIT Bumrah was standing at fine-leg all by himself, with his hands on hips. It was about 10.50 AM on Sunday at The Gabba. Unlike the day one of the third Test between India and Australia, the sun was out and shining, and the extra half hour taken to compensate had gone well.

Bumrah, thanks to the rain on Saturday, had been able to continue his spell on Sunday and he was breathing fire. He ran in with purpose, removed both the openers, leaving Marcus Labuschagne and Steve Smith in the middle. Bumrah was desperate to break them up. He had bowled 11 overs till then, of which six were maidens, taking 2/12. On day two, he had bowled six on the trot when drinks were taken.

While the entire team having their break near the pitch, the pacer was on the boundary. Apparently, Bumrah seemed to have asked for another over, but Rohit Sharma didn't want to overbowl him. This was after 24 overs and the scoreboard read 53/2. Over the next hour or so, Bumrah felt like a guy watching from outside, wondering 'what more can I do'. He would go from mid-on to fine leg every over while Mohammed Siraj and Akash Deep continued. A few overs on, Nitish K Reddy too was brought on. At this point, Labuschagne and Smith had got their eye in and looked set for a big score. Smith had brought back his trigger movement while the local lad was in a hurry to get going.

Even as they kept the scoreboard moving, it was not as fast as they would have liked. The packed Gabba crowd was egging them on, booing Siraj every time he ran in. It was an intense hour where the run rate was a little over two. Labuschagne, after 54 balls, was searching for his first boundary. Reddy bowled a full delivery and the No 3 went for it. However, it was a gift that Virat Kohli took with both hands in the slips.

It was the perfect time for Sharma to bring back Bumrah or Akash Deep for a short spell. Travis Head had just come in and the last thing India would have wanted is to let him settle down. However, that didn't happen. Sharma persisted with Reddy and Siraj till the latter walked out in the middle of his 11th over (fifth on trot). Bumrah too came back, bowled three overs before lunch, but couldn't make anything happen.

The story continued in the second session as well with Bumrah keeping it tight while at the other end, Sharma let things slip through. The bowling changes, the fields that were set for Head made little sense as the southpaw raced to another fifty. Every time India started with a plan, Head countered — cutting too close, pulling, ramp shots and so on — and they'll change up. Sharma rarely persisted with a plan. "That's one thing we need to discuss. Are we going to chase the ball? Probably not. Or are we going to stick to the plan and just execute better? That is some of the things we will sit and look at tonight and over the next couple of days and you know have to get better at," bowling coach Morne Morkel would admit later in the evening.

Akash Deep and Bumrah did their part with not much success during that period. Sharma's captaincy, and Ravindra Jadeja's lackluster bowling did not help India cause either. India went through the motions as Head and Smith piled on runs. Head brought up his successive century against India as the duo went into tea unbroken and soon Smith, too, get to the three-figure mark that he was so desperate for. Sharma had spread out fields four Head, allowing him to operate with ease. To understand the difference, here are some numbers. Since Bumrah's second spell (which was six overs split into three on either side of lunch) till Sharma brought him back when Head was in 90s, India conceded 93 runs in 18 overs at 5.16 runs per over. Post that two over spell from Bumrah till the second new ball was taken, Australia smashed Reddy and Jadeja for 69 runs in 11 overs, taking the score up to 297/3 in 80 overs.

Having been waiting for that moment, Bumrah took it right away, and all he needed was 12 balls. He pushed it wide and full and Smith, having reached his ton, went for it. Bumrah got the outside edge. Once again, it had to be him. Shortly after, he got Mitchell Marsh in a very similar manner to that off Nathan McSweeney — good length just outside off stump, shaping away and taking the outside edge of the batter. Two balls later, as he got rid of Head, Bumrah's hands went aloft — more in relief than ecstasy. He had taken his second fifer of the tour — five of the six that had fallen till then.

A personal moment on a day where the rest couldn't do much. In fact, it has been the story since the win in Perth. Bumrah carrying the weight of this team. To be fair, Akash Deep did bowl really well with little luck. And it showed. Bumrah operated at less than three runs per over (2.88) while Akash Deep a little over (3.16) as Australia finished the day with 405/7.

There is still three days to go in the match, but no one will be looking forward to the thunderstorms that are expected over the next couple of days than the Indian team. If the rain stays away, Australia might just have batted India out of the match, and maybe, the series.

Vintage knock: Trademark shuffle is back & so is Smith

GOMESH S @ Brisbane

FROM the moment Steve Smith strolled out to bat at the Gabba on Sunday morning, the signs were there. In the lead up to the third Test, the Australian had been practising with his shuffle across trigger movement — something he hadn't done in a while — and somewhere it felt like the big knock was coming.

Smith took the leg-stump guard against a belligerent Jasprit Bumrah. Facing his first delivery, Smith shuffled across so much that his leg stump was visible. As the ball bruised his thigh pad and flew, there were oohs and aahs at the media centre. 'Start writing your copies, Smith's back and he's scoring a hundred' declared one of the scribes from Australia.

To be fair, having watched Smith in Perth and Adelaide, this did feel different. His trigger movement was such that he was covering the off-stump and playing to his strengths. This is a technique that brought him a lot of success over the years, but off late he had to shelve it. Even when he brought it back on Sunday, there was a risk. Much like Virat Kohli, Smith too had developed the habit of chasing balls outside off-stump with his hands.

The question here was whether India, who had successfully contained Smith by shutting down his off-side on his last tour, get their plans right. For Smith, who had gone 24 innings without a century, it was about spending time in the middle while keeping the scoreboard moving.

While it might seem simple from the outset, for someone who admittedly changes his trigger movement and guard for almost every match, it's not easy to shut everything down and just bat. And it showed on the very second ball he faced. Akash Deep kept it full, Smith tried to drive only to be beaten on the inside edge. And it was not going to be the last time either.

Australia's Steven Smith hit 101 off 190 balls against India on Day 2 | AFP

But Smith kept at it. He kept shuffling across, covering the line and the fact that India kept mid-wicket relatively open only helped him. He worked the ball around the square on the leg, kept picking up singles and doubles. He had his share of luck, when the occasional outside edges went through the slips for boundary.

There were even a couple of occasions when India got the line and length right for him. Once the ball hit him on the pad when he offered no shot, but bounced over. The other time when it looked like the ball was going to crash into the stumps, he got some bat on it. Then there was of course the umpires call on which he survived.

Smith wasn't letting any of this bother him. He would shrug it off, go through his idiosyncratic routines and focus on the next ball. And then Travis Head made life easy for him as Rohit Sharma and his bowlers were making plans for the former while Smith kept moving forward. He finally entered the 90s and eventually brought up his hundred in 185 balls.

The celebration, which was more relief than anything else, was acknowledged by a packed Gabba crowd who were on their feet. Smith, although underplayed the milestone, knew what it meant to him. "If you go through a period where you're not having much luck — I think last week I was a bit unlucky getting strangled down the leg side — you've got to keep the faith and know that things will turn around if you keep doing the hard work. I've been putting the hard work in. I rode my luck today. I had a little bit early on, for sure. Got beaten a few times, which it's going to happen on that wicket. On another day, I might nick one of those. But, I was playing the line nicely. I was getting in good positions. I left well early. So, it was nice to get some reward for it," Smith explained later in the day.

As for why he brought back the trigger movement, the former Australian captain said that he had to make the adjustment for the surface. When the series began, one of the concerns India had was Smith getting into form. For once he hits the groove, he piles on. While this match is yet to be done with, the visitors would be more worried about what lies ahead, especially now considering the fact that it is not just Head, they have to deal with Smith as well come Melbourne and Sydney.

Man United's Amad Diallo (2L) celebrates after scoring against Man City | AFP

United pile on City's misery

AGENCIES @ London

MANCHESTER United struck twice in the dying minutes to earn a dramatic 2-1 win at Manchester City on Sunday, deepening the pain of City boss Pep Guardiola.

Josko Gvardiol's first-half goal appeared to have won the game for the Premier League champions but Bruno Fernandes levelled from the penalty spot in the 88th minute and the impressive Amad Diallo poked home the winner two minutes later. Crystal Palace savoured a first win over rivals Brighton since 2021 as a 3-1 victory lifted the Eagles four points clear of the relegation zone. Late on Saturday, Nottingham Forest beat Aston Villa 2-1.

Real held by Rayo

Rayo Vallecano held Real Madrid to a pulsating 3-3 draw in La Liga on Saturday. Real turned up at their city rivals after a hard fought 3-2 away win at Atalanta in the Champions League in midweek.

WPL auction: Unsold last season, Simran costliest this time

KALYANI MANGALE @ Bengaluru

SIMRAN Shaikh is a "*bindhast*" person. A proper Bambaiya cricketer. A player with whom you can have an evening tea and talk about the game for hours. But don't let her laidback attitude fool you. When it comes to her cricket, she is as focused as one can be. Sunetra Paranjpe, current head coach of Mumbai women's team can attest to that.

"Way back, in her U19 days, we worked together and I saw the special talent in her in terms of six-hitting capacity," Paranjpe, who is currently with Mumbai's senior side in Ahmedabad for the Senior Women's One Day Championship told this daily. "That time I thought she would make it big, but she needed to develop her game as she progressed. And she has worked hard for this. She had a few bad years under her belt, but she has learned from those mistakes. I hope she has the best season in the WPL," she added. As three of Paranjpe's current wards — Shaikh, Prakashika Naik and Jagravi Pawar — are set to join their respective Women's Premier League franchises, she is one happy coach now.

Top five bids (INR)

Name	Country	Base Price	Final Bid	Teams
Simran Shaikh	India	10L	1.90cr	GG
Deandra Dottin	West Indies	50L	1.70cr	GG
G Kamilini	India	10L	1.60cr	MI
Prema Rawat	India	10L	1.20cr	RCB
N Charani	India	10 L	55 L	DC

Way back, in her U19 days, we worked together and I saw the special talent in her (Simran) in terms of six-hitting capacity.

—Sunetra Paranjpe, current head coach of Mumbai women's team

Born and raised in Mumbai's Dharavi slums, Shaikh was picked up by the UP Warriorz in the first season of WPL, but a poor run in the inaugural outing saw her getting released by the franchise. She then went unsold for the 2024 season. With no performance to show in either the franchise competition or the domestic season for Mumbai, Shaikh had to work hard. And that she did. In the domestic T20 season that included the Senior T20 Trophy, which Mumbai won for the second time in a row, Shaikh played her role to the perfection as Mumbai lifted the Trophy at their home ground in Wankhede Stadium. However, in the Challenger Trophy that followed in Ranchi, the Mumbai batter scored runs with a strike rate of 200 and helped Team E clinch the title. That changed everything. Michael Klinger, Head Coach of Gujarat Giants knew how important a player of that caliber could be for the Giants after the disappointment of the first two seasons. While they certainly did not expect the intense bidding war for her, the Giants were ready to pay the amount.

Simran Shaikh was picked up by Gujarat Giants for ₹1.90 crore on Sunday

"Leading into the auction, we probably didn't think she would go that high, but she was the player of interest for us," Klinger told the media. "In particular because of her power-hitting and strike rate this season. We have seen her in the recent Challenger Trophy, her strike rate was over 200, which is rare in women's cricket. We were looking for someone to bring power to our squad and she was that player," he added.

Gujarat were confident to have her on their side that they were ready to pay Shaikh more than West Indies superstar Deandra Dottin and in the end they did. They bought Shaikh for Rs 1.90 crore. "We didn't bid for anyone else other than those two we got. They were the exact two players we wanted to get in the first two sets. They are the batters who have a lot of power and it compliments the rest of our squad. We were looking for two power-hitters and we got them. I am not worried about the price tag, it is the skill set that we needed and we are really happy with that," Klinger was beaming ear to ear talking about his latest acquisitions.

While Paranjpe still needs her players to concentrate on the match Mumbai is scheduled to play on Monday, she had a small update on Shaikh. "She was really happy." And why wouldn't she? The girl who grew up in Dharavi set the WPL auction on fire on Sunday in Bengaluru.

MT 2800 AND ITS ASCENT

Erigaisi lauds Gukesh, recounts own incredible journey

AJAY TOMAR @ Hyderabad

IT was no surprise for Arjun Erigaisi to witness his teammate and friend D Gukesh become a world champion. The India No 1 had predicted the recent World Chess Championship to be a one-sided event in favour of Gukesh while speaking to this daily last month.

Speaking to this daily from Doha, where he was participating in Qatar Masters (finished in a tie for second place), Erigaisi said, "Gukesh's achievement is massive and I am very happy for him. The result was not a surprise in any way but it was a pleasant surprise to see it happen today (Thursday) as it looked like it was going to head into playoffs." The Qatar Masters result means that GM Fabiano Caruana still maintains a narrow lead over him in the 2024 FIDE Circuit, the leader of which will qualify for the 2026 Candidates event. As per a social media chess tracker handle 'Chess Numbers India,' Erigaisi needs to win the World Rapid Championship or tie at most with three players and win on tie breaks to overtake Caruana in the FIDE circuit.

However, Erigaisi believes that it is still "very early" to think about that now while stressing upon celebrating Gukesh's historic achievement. "I think we should all just enjoy Gukesh's victory for now."

At the start of the year, Erigaisi's FIDE live ratings were near 2740 but as the year progressed, the Warangal chess prodigy officially crossed the 2800 mark in FIDE's December rating list. The 21-year-old is now the second Indian after former world champion Viswanathan Anand to officially go past the rating barrier.

Arjun Erigaisi

In October this year, where Erigaisi defeated Russian GM Dmitry Andreikin in round five of European Club Cup (Serbia), he reached 2802.1 by live rating, becoming 16th player in the history to be part of the rare club. During an interaction with this daily before the Qatar Masters, Erigaisi said, "When it happened (crossing 2800 by live rating), I was happy because I won my game and I knew before this would happen if I win the game but I did not care much about it and it was an important match for the team. But unfortunately, our team lost the game that we supposed would end in a draw. But it still matters a lot and feels nice that I am in this list with the absolute top players of Kasparov (Garry), Carlsen (Magnus), Anand sir. It feels good to join them. In less than a year, I made a gain of 60 points." He views 2024 as a 'huge moment', especially winning the coveted Olympiad title, including an individual gold. "When I began the year, I was at 2738 (live rating) and now I reached 2800, so that's a big rating game and winning gold at the Olympiad, both in team and individual events was a huge moment. Also, winning the WR Masters Cup was very good as it was one of few invitational tourneys where I played against a strong line-up of Abdusattorov (Nodirbek), Alireza (Firouzja), Pragg (R Praggnanandhaa) and Anand sir," he recalled. The World No 4 will be among the five Indians who will be featuring in the World Rapid & Blitz Championship to be held in New York from Dec 26 to 31.

Full story: newindianexpress.com

EXPRESS READ

Rithvik clinches maiden Super 100 title

ODISHA: India's Rithvik Sanjeevi Satish Kumar capped off an impressive week by claiming his maiden BWF Super 100 title after defeating compatriot Tharun Mannepalli in the men's singles final at the Odisha Masters. The 21-year-old triumphed 21-18, 21-16 over Tharun, a runner-up at the Senior National Championship.

Mumbai City FC edge 10-man Mohammedan

KOLKATA: Mumbai City FC edged past Mohammedan SC by 1-0 at the Kishore Bharati Krirangan in the ISL to record their fourth win of the season. Vikram Pratap Singh scored the lone goal. Mohammedan's Mohammed Irshad was sent off in the 35th minute.

Sonam, Kamilini guide India to win over Pak

KUALA LUMPUR: India beat Pakistan in a Group A match of the U19 Women's T20 Asia Cup. Spinner Sonam Yadav, 17, had figures of 4 for 6, helping India restrict Pakistan to just 67/7. The total was then overhauled in 7.5 overs, with G Kamilini hitting unbeaten 44.

India retain Women's Junior Asia Cup hockey title

MUSCAT: India's goalkeeper Nidhi stole the limelight in the penalty shootout, making three sensational saves to help India overcome three-time champs China 3-2 (1-1) and clinch their second consecutive Women's Junior Asia Cup hockey title here. The Indian goalkeeper once again emerged as the standout performer.

UPCOMING EXAMINATIONS

RRB TECHNICIAN
Date: December 19, 20, 23, 24, 26, 28 & 29, 2024

IBSAT
Date: December 28 & 29, 2024

TELANGANA MPHA FEMALE
Date: December 29, 2024

THE NEW SAT

The new format of the SAT is here to stay, but does it come with its own hurdles and challenges? USA-based Meghana Kothapalli, who has serendipitously given both versions of the test, tells Varsha Sagi about how she thinks the new shift could impact the test-taking journey of future aspirants

Stress-free or full of surprises?

THE shift from pen-and-paper to E-SATs has been a game-changer for students worldwide, but how are they really feeling about this transformation? As the test adapts to the changing times, students worldwide are grappling with both opportunities and challenges.

EdexLive spoke to Meghana Kothapalli, a student at the University of Georgia, United States (US), who has taken the previous pen-and-paper SAT, to know what she thinks the future test-takers have in store for them!

● How do you think the experience of the traditional pen-and-paper test you took compares to the new digitised version?
I took the pen-and-paper test, but I got the opportunity to take the digitised test during the research testing phase of rolling out the new exam.

The pen-and-paper exam took me much longer to do as it took extra time to flip through the exam for the reading passages and bubble in the answers. It was much faster to read the passages online while using the cursor to follow along.

I was able to finish the digital exam with 10-15 minutes to spare. On paper, I often had several questions left unanswered solely because of time constraints.

The actual content of the exam was very similar for most of the sections, the only difference was the interaction with the exam itself. For the Math section, the digital exam was much easier because they gave you an online graphing calculator for the entire section so I did not have to stress as much as long as I knew how to plug the problem into the calculator.

● Do you think the students taking the test in 2024 have it easier?
Yes, the online exam is very user-friendly, and one can line up the passages right next to the questions so that it is very organised and one is able to focus more. The annotation tools mimic what one would normally be able to do on paper, so there was not much of a difference.

The only barrier one may face is that one can no longer do the Math problems directly on the question; however, since most of the problems can be keyed in directly into the calculator, this is not a big problem.

● Do you agree that this method reduces test-taking stress?
I think that the exam is stressful regardless of the method it is taken in. It likely won't change the things we stress about.

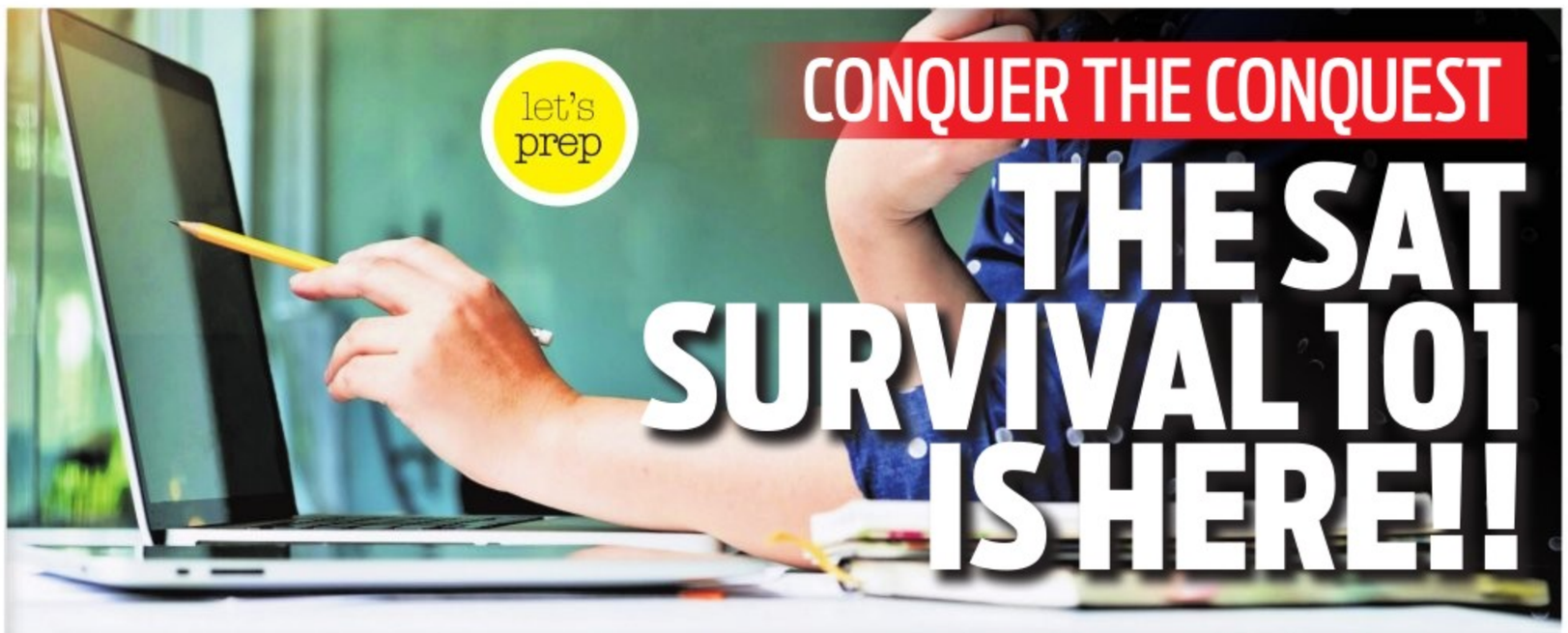
Instead of worrying about the previously no-calculator Math section, I might worry more about whether my laptop will work or if I have everything I need to keep my test from glitching or shutting down in the middle of the exam.

In the end, while it may reduce stress for some, I don't think it is enough to say, as a whole, that the digital exam is less stressful.

● Do you fear that any technical malfunctions could disrupt one's test-taking experience?
This is a very real possibility; in fact, before I took the digital exam, I spent 45 minutes in a line because of a WiFi issue, which led to lots of stress before an already stressful exam. Other than this, as long as students are prepared with chargers and the required technology, I don't anticipate malfunctions disrupting the test.

● Do you think time management could be more challenging with online tests compared to traditional ones?
Time management should be better online because you get a personal timer saying how long you have left rather than trying to read the clock across the room or waiting for a teacher to tell you that there are 10 minutes left.

The issue I predict is that people will finish at different times because there is a personal timer. That might cause tension or distractions which might affect time management. In theory, time management should be better with a digital exam.



let's prep

CONQUER THE CONQUEST
THE SAT SURVIVAL 101 IS HERE!!

The acclaimed college entrance exam the SAT, owned and conducted by College Board, is going to see changes in its pattern, hence students might find themselves in a fix. But don't you worry, as **Saumya Solanki** & **Varsha Sagi** bring you another edition of the SAT series to clear all your doubts!

THE SAT, is attempted by over three million students annually, of which about 25,000 write it from India. With time, changes are gradually being introduced to the exam, such as the recent transition to a digital SAT pattern, which raised a few important questions.

Are you, as a SAT aspirant, being plagued by queries such as, "How can I access the right resources now that there is a change in the SAT format?", "How would I pay the exam entry fee?", and "What strategies can help me bridge these gaps?"

EdexLive, in conversation with Rushi Sheth, the Vice-President of the College Board's International division, is here with solutions to your SAT-related doubts.

1 The digital SAT adapts to each student's academic proficiency. Between coaching institutes and self-study, what preparation style actually works now?
Success on the digital SAT lies in adopting a preparation strategy tailored to individual strengths and learning preferences. The test's adaptive nature dynamically evaluates a student's performance, making targeted preparation essential.

Structured programmes offered by coaching institutes provide discipline, expert guidance, and access to curated resources that help students build foundational knowledge and effective test-taking strategies.

Simultaneously, self-paced, adaptive learning tools like Khan Academy's official SAT practice — developed in partnership with the College Board — empower students to focus on areas they would like to improve in. These tools include thousands of practice questions, instructional videos, and full-length practice tests aligned to the SAT format.

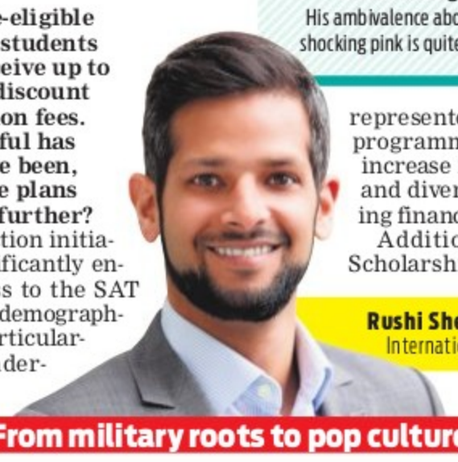
A blended approach, leveraging both coaching institutes and self-study tools, offers the best of both worlds.

2 Income-eligible Indian students can receive up to a 90% discount on registration fees. How successful has this initiative been, and are there plans to expand it further?
The fee reduction initiative has significantly enhanced access to the SAT for a broader demographic in India, particularly among underrepresented groups. This programme has led to an increase in participation and diversity by alleviating financial barriers.

Additionally, the SAT Scholarships program offers substantial registration fee reductions for income-eligible students in India:

- Students from families earning less than ₹8 lakh annually are eligible for a 90% fee discount.
- Students from families with an annual income between ₹8 lakh and ₹15 lakh receive a 50% fee discount.

These measures, combined with free preparation resources like Bluebook and Khan Academy, ensure that deserving students have the tools and financial support to succeed.



Rushi Sheth, Vice President International, College Board

3 With the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) - National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) preparation running parallel, how should Indian students plan their SAT journey?
Ideally, students should begin their SAT journey in Class X or early in Class XI. Starting early allows them to spread out their preparation and fit it into their existing schedules without overloading themselves. The SAT, with its focus on reasoning, problem-solving, and analytical skills, differs significantly from JEE-NEET, which emphasise subject-specific knowledge.

By creating a structured plan and utilising digital tools, students can successfully navigate the demands of both paths, ultimately enhancing their college admission prospects both in India and globally.

4 Many students take multiple attempts to improve scores. What patterns have you observed in score improvements across attempts?
Students often see measurable improvement in their SAT scores with subsequent attempts, particularly when they take a strategic approach to preparation. Research indicates that over two-thirds of students improve their scores on their second attempt. This improvement is primarily due to increased familiarity with the test format and the ability to focus on specific areas where they can improve.

5 Beyond test prep companies, what College Board resources should students be using more effectively?
Students should maximise College Board's free official resources to enhance their SAT preparation. Tools like Khan Academy's adaptive practice, the SAT Prep mobile app, and the Bluebook digital testing guide provide personalised feedback and simulate real test conditions, helping students focus on areas for improvement.

With over 126 test centres across India, the College Board has ensured widespread access. For students who don't own devices, the Device Lending Program bridges digital access gaps, ensuring equitable participation. These resources empower students to build confidence.

Vocab Vault

Master these high-frequency SAT words to impress admission officers

Lament (verb)
To feel sorrow for or mourn
He lamented his decision to binge-watch the entire show a night before the SATs.

Galvanising (adjective)
Thrilling or inspiring
Her galvanising TikTok about climate change got everyone planting trees.

Nuance (noun)
A subtle difference or detail
Picking the perfect IG filter is all about understanding the nuance of lighting.

Egregious (adjective)
Shockingly bad
Forgetting your best friend's birthday is an egregious mistake you must avoid.

Benevolent (adjective)
Kind and generous
The benevolent pizza delivery guy gave me an extra slice "just because."

Viability (noun)
The ability to work successfully
The viability of her plan to sneak snacks into the movie depended on a really big purse.

Scrutinise (verb)
To examine closely & critically
They scrutinised the group selfie to make sure their hair looked flawless.

Ambivalence (noun)
Mixed feelings or uncertainty
His ambivalence about dyeing his hair shocking pink is quite obvious, isn't it?

Formula frenzy

Master these essential formulas to save time and score higher on test day

Linear Equation
Formula: y = mx + b
What it means: Equation of a straight line, where m is the slope (rise/run), and b is the y-intercept (where the line crosses the y-axis).
Why it's critical: Linear equations frequently appear in SAT questions about graphs and slopes.

Slope Formula
Formula: m = (y2 - y1) / (x2 - x1)
What it means: The slope measures how steep a line is, calculated by the change in y over the change in x.
Why it's critical: SAT questions often require you to find or interpret the slope of a line.

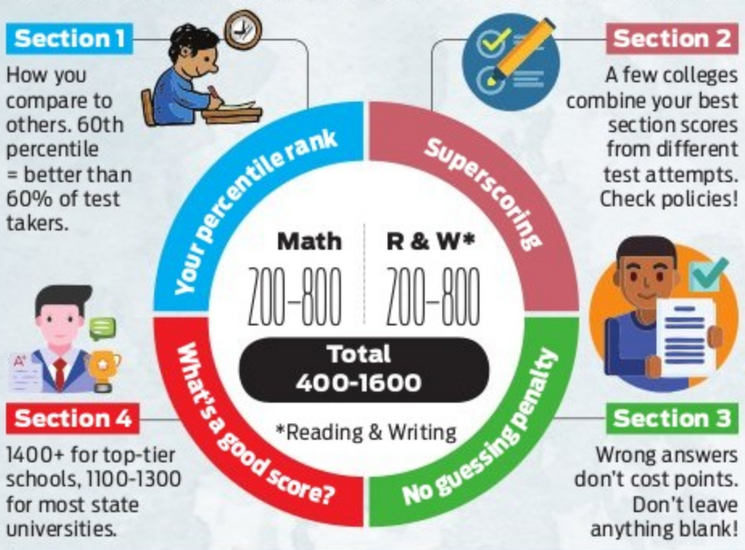
Quadratic Formula
Formula: $x = (-b \pm \sqrt{(b^2 - 4ac)}) / (2a)$
What it means: This formula finds the roots (solutions) of any quadratic equation, where the equation is in the form $ax^2 + bx + c = 0$.
Why it's critical: Quadratic equations are a SAT staple, & this will help you solve any of them.

Pythagorean Theorem
Formula: $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$
What it means: In a right triangle, the square of the hypotenuse (c, the longest side) is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides.
Why it's critical: Essential for solving geometry problems involving right triangles and distance.

Distance Between Points
Formula: $d = \sqrt{[(x2 - x1)^2 + (y2 - y1)^2]}$
What it means: Calculates the distance between two points on a coordinate plane.
Why it's critical: Often tested in questions that ask about the length or midpoints of lines.

Understanding SAT scores

Get a clear picture of how your SAT is scored and what it means


Section 1
How you compare to others. 60th percentile = better than 60% of test takers.
Your percentile rank
Section 2
A few colleges combine your best section scores from different test attempts. Check policies!
Superscoring
Math
R & W*
200-800
200-800
Total 400-1600
*Reading & Writing
What's a good score?
No guessing penalty
Section 3
Wrong answers don't cost points. Don't leave anything blank!
Section 4
1400+ for top-tier schools, 1100-1300 for most state universities.

HOW DO YOU MEASURE UP?

The average SAT score for the Class of 2022 was 1050 in the United States of America, with section averages of 529 for Reading and Writing, and 521 for Math. These averages are calculated by dividing the total scores of all test takers by their number, and analysed by state, gender, race/ethnicity, and other demographics.

From military roots to pop culture nods, discover the surprising history and twists of the SAT

SAT trivia that even pros may not know!

A military experiment gone academic
The SAT has its roots in World War I intelligence testing. The exam's predecessor, designed to measure IQ, helped the US Army evaluate recruits. Years later, this test evolved into an academic tool, forever shaping college admissions.

The curious case of its name
Did you know the SAT doesn't stand for anything today? It once meant "Scholastic Aptitude Test," but after debates about whether it truly measured aptitude, the acronym became a name without meaning.

Cancelled across a nation
In 2013, a serious cheating scandal in South Korea prompted the College Board to cancel the SAT nationwide for the scheduled test date. Thousands of students had to rework their plans, underscoring the strict measures taken to ensure fairness.

A journey of format changes
The SAT has been reimagined multiple times since its first administration in 1926. The early test was a 97-minute marathon with over 300 questions, while today's version is far more streamlined, even dropping penalties for guessing in 2016.

An experiment in public accessibility
The SAT was introduced as a scholarship test for Ivy League schools, starting with Harvard, in 1934. Its broader adoption aimed to level the playing field, bringing talented public school students into elite institutions.

Language learners have the edge: Studying foreign languages can apparently boost SAT scores. Students with over four years of language study have historically performed better, with those learning Chinese, Korean, and Latin often topping the charts.

Prep began in a basement
The concept of SAT prep courses was pioneered in 1938 by Stanley Kaplan, who tutored students from his basement in Brooklyn. His efforts laid the foundation for the multi-billion-dollar test prep industry we know today.

A "fake" section with real impacts
Past versions of the SAT included an experimental section that didn't count toward final scores. While the College Board has been vague about its current form, unscored questions are supposedly still a hidden element in some test versions.

— Compiled by Nikhil Abhishek

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16•12•2024
MONDAY

DAY'S DIARY

Happy Birthday

Jane Austen was born on this day in 1775 and into a middle-class family in Steventon, Hampshire. She was the seventh of eight children

EARLY LIFE

Aside from one year of formal schooling, she was educated at home. Her father's library consisted of about 500 books, which she regularly perused

WRITING CAREER

Jane completed her first novel, *Love and Friendship*, at age 14. The book was succeeded by *A History of England*, which was never published

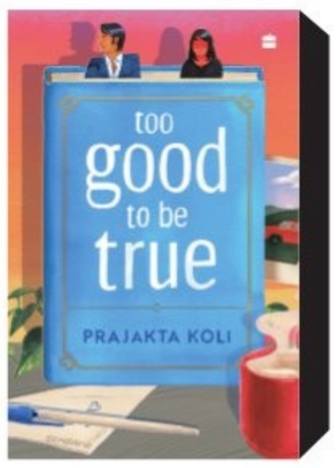
TRIVIA

Chawton Cottage is where the writer wrote all of her six novels, though she may have written early drafts in other homes

Sweet Li'l Thing

PG 3

Popular actor and YouTuber Prajakta Koli, is riding high with numerous personal and professional milestones all happening at once – the launch of her book, *Too Good To Be True*, the release of Season 3 of Netflix drama *Mismatched*, and her recent engagement



'THE BOOK WAS NEVER A PLAN'

MAHIMA NAGARAJU

PICS: ALLEN EGENUSE J & NAGARAJA GADEKAL

WITH her bubbly personality and characteristic humour, **Prajakta Koli** has charmed her way into the hearts of many Gen-Zs and millennials who grew up watching her funny YouTube Videos. After nearly 10 years of being a content creator and starring in the popular show *Mismatched* whose third season released recently, she's turning her attention towards something that she's always loved to do – write, with her upcoming novel, *Too Good To Be True*. "I grew up journaling every single day and couldn't wait to get back home so I could write what happened in school that day. It was also one of my favourite parts of making content – writing down sketches and creating characters," she says.

Koli's novel follows the story of Avani, a bookworm who loves romance novels but is a cynic when it comes to finding love in real life. What happens when she meets Aman, a seemingly-flawless man who seems to have stepped out of a romance novel himself? "Because of the life she's had, Avani is a 'romance cynic', while Aman is 'too good to be true'. It's all about how Avani and Aman find their balance with her trust issues and his general flawlessness," she explains.

A still from *Mismatched*

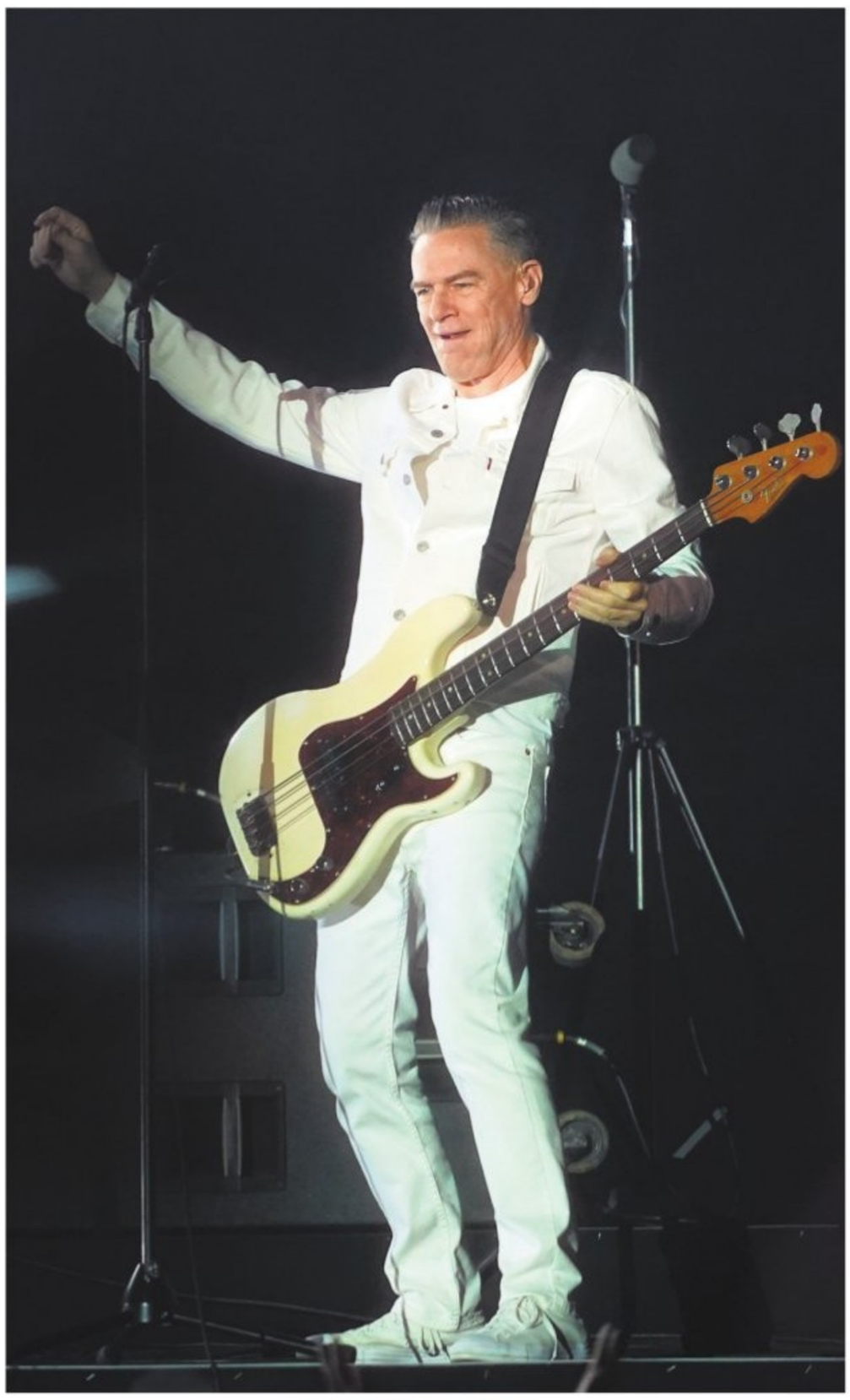
The novel, which started off as a screenplay, has gone through countless iterations and drafts to be what it is now. "During the lockdown, I started ideating on concepts I wanted to make into films and shows. The book was never a plan. I just started writing like I would a journal and a few chapters started looking like a book. It took me a year for the first draft and edits kept going on till last week. My editors kept saying 'Prajakta, the book needs to go to press' and I'd say 'I know I know one last change'," she laughs.

With Koli recently announcing her engagement with long-term partner Vrishank Khanal, the one question on the minds of her fans was how much of this book's love story is based on real life? Koli laughs, "No, nothing! The only thing is that Aman has brown eyes and dimples and Vrishank has them, too. Other than that, they're not the same at all."

The novel has received a huge response from audiences, reaching No.1 on Amazon India's bestseller list within 24 hours of opening for pre-orders. "When I woke up at 8am, we were already on top, which was just mad," she says.

As all good romances do, Koli hopes that her book leaves readers feeling hopeful, "For me, a romance [book] has to be aspirational. If I wanted it to be like real life, why would I go to a book? I must have read around 200 romance books since 2022 and there's just something about the hope of 'this might happen to me'. The joy that comes with knowing the characters end up coming together is what makes me happy, even if it is unrealistic."

Speaking about Season 3 of her Netflix drama *Mismatched* which came out recently, she says, "I love that I've been Dimple [her character in the show] for more than five years now, and still, when I went on set for the new season, there was so much I didn't know about her." Explaining her character's growth on the show, she continues, "The fact that nothing has worked out for her so far can be jarring but I love how she's gone about it. She's always been averse to being defined by a relationship, but this season, she puts her guard down a bit for love to flow in."



HERE I AM!

Legendary singer Bryan Adams took the Bengaluru audience on a nostalgic ride with his performance at Terraform, Yelahanka, on Saturday, as a part of his ongoing 'So Happy It Hurts' world tour | EVA LIVE

WORDS OF WORTH

The 13th edition of the Bangalore Literature Festival drew thousands eager to hear Nobel laureates, celebrated authors, intellectuals, and more share their perspectives on books and ideas

MAHIMA NAGARAJU & POOJA DAS

FOR'S annual tradition of Bangalore Literature Festival – where thousands of book lovers gather to meet their favourite authors from all over the world – closed its 13th edition over the weekend at The Lalit Ashok, Seshadripuram. Bringing together a vibrant community of writers, readers, publishers, actors, influencers, and musicians to celebrate the world of books, the festival attracted about 25,000 attendees this year, eager to share space with the best of the best in the literary circles.

(With inputs from Abiya Justina Babu and Ritika Sarkar)

Books, panels and packed rooms

Featuring a lineup of 350 speakers across two days of panel discussions, readings, and performances, the festival brought internationally acclaimed authors like William Darlymple, Ramachandra Guha and **Manu S Pillai,** who spoke about their books *The Golden Road*, *Speaking with Nature*, and *Guns, Gods and Missionaries*, respectively. "I've seen the festival grow over the years, and every year, the enthusiasm only grows stronger. Almost every session I've attended is packed, with people standing in aisles or sitting on the floor. Literature and books matter—they help us make sense of the world, connecting us to the past, present, and future," says Pillai, a speaker on both days of the festival.

Nobel minds on stage

This year's edition was particularly noteworthy as it featured intellectually stimulating sessions by two Nobel laureates — biologist **Venki Ramakrishnan** and economist Abhijit Banerjee. In a session based on his book *Why We Die*, Ramakrishnan delved into the moral, ethical, and social questions surrounding human mortality. "This quest is an eternal one, never fully answered. We must see ourselves as part of the larger fabric of life rather than as isolated individuals. Just as cells in our bodies die all the time and regenerate without us noticing, individuals may die, but life — and society — will carry on," he remarks, reflecting on the societal implications of extended lifespans.

'My grandkids don't accept the stories I accepted from my grandmother'

Apart from a colourful lineup at BLF, the festival's Children's Literature Festival (CLF) segment featured over 75 sessions aimed at fostering a love for books and nature among young readers, with one of the favourite children's storytellers, **Sudha Murty**'s session being packed with children and adults alike. "I consider myself a children's author. I like children because they are very simple. Whatever you write stays with them forever," shares Murty, while acknowledging that the way the younger generations are listening to stories has changed over the years. "When I was a child, I used to listen to whatever my Ajji used to tell me without question but my grandchildren ask questions. I told them about Samudra Manthan and my granddaughter said why should the Devas get all the things, there should have been an MoU between them. My grandkids don't accept the stories I accepted from my grandmother. You have to give them intellectual answers and be more convincing."

Bengaluru's literary soul

Actor and Ranga Shankara's artistic director, **Arundhati Nag**, shared her thoughts on the festival's significance, saying, "Bengaluru has a larger critical mass of readers compared to other cities. Jaipur [Literature Festival] has become a tourist destination, but BLF feels like a local celebration — it's for and by the people of this city."

Exclusive sneak peek

Bibliophiles were also lucky to be the first to hear the Man Booker Prize awardee **Kiran Desai** read from her much-anticipated upcoming novel *The Loneliness of Sonia and Sunny*, which is set to release next year. "The story of Sonia and Sunny is less about finding a cure to loneliness and more about them being forced to confront and consider various loneliness in our global modernised world."

Pop-fiction highlights

The festival highlighted popular contemporary voices. Author Chetan Bhagat introduced his book, *11 Rules for Life: Secrets to Level Up*, marking his foray into the self-help genre. Another crowd favourite, **Durjoy Datta**, spoke about his new release, *The World's Best Worst Ex-Girlfriend*. "All my female characters are driven because that's the kind of women I grew up around," he shared.

Aslam Gafoor (@aslamgafoor) is a hospitality professional with experience in business development, sales, and marketing with well-known hotels and food and beverage companies. A few of his passions are travel, food and wine, and he enjoys sharing these experiences as a columnist.

GRUB HUB

THE QUIZ WILL BE PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY

Send answers to **bengalurucityexpress@gmail.com** with the subject line **'Food quiz'**
The correct answers and names of the first three respondents with right answers will be featured in *CE* on Monday.
The winner will receive a voucher worth ₹1,500 from Smoor Chocolates (dine-in only)**

THE RIGHT ANSWERS

1)Glühwein; 2)Ribollita; 3)Tourtiere

FIRST 3 TO GET IT RIGHT

1) Divya S; 2) Rupesh;
3) Lakshmi P

CITY READ

School organises a fun day out

Vasavi Vidya Niketan Group of Institutions, VV Puram, hosted FIESTA, a day full of games and entertainment, recently. The event aimed to provide a refreshing break from monotonous academic routines, and featured a plethora of fun activities and games designed for participants of all age groups.

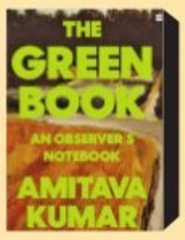
Medical camp held by university

Christ University Alumni Foundation, in association with N Hospital and Titan Eye Plus, organised a free medical camp for all faculty, non-teaching staff, and students. Over 1,500 units of blood were collected, potentially saving 5,000 lives. Jose C, Vice Chancellor, Christ University, inaugurated the camp and appreciated the Alumni Foundation for their 25 years of consecutive service.

City-based entrepreneur launches period tracking app

Asan, a city-based menstrual health venture, launched a period-tracking app designed by an all-female team of developers and designers. The app, available on the Apple Store and Google Play Store, offers an environment tracking feature that helps to calculate the carbon footprint of their period products, encouraging a shift to sustainable options like menstrual cups or period underwear. In addition to its environmental features, the app offers free analytical insights. The app will enable women to track their menstrual cycles, monitor symptoms, and identify health issues. Founded in 2021 by Ira Guha, recipient of the Cartier Women's Initiative prize, Asan offers patented reusable menstrual cups, replacing 2,500 pads each.

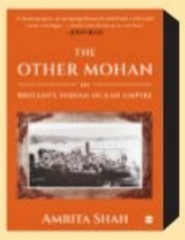
BOOK NOOK



The Green Book: An Observer's Notebook

By Amitava Kumar

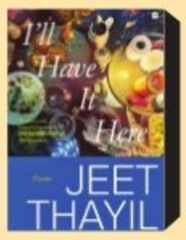
The author addresses subjects such as the interconnectedness of all living things, the complexities of Indian cultural identity, the contrast between destruction and beauty.



The Other Mohan

By Amrita Shah

On a quest to understand why her great-grandfather, Mohanlal, set sail for South Africa from pre-independent India, Amrita Shah takes the reader into an era of unprecedented global mobility.



I'll Have It Here

By Jeet Thayil

This collection of poems is a dazzle of rhyme in the orchard of song, a contemporary survey of history and culture, and an exercise in spiritual jaywalking along the streets of New York City and New Delhi and Budapest.

2024: The Election That Surprised India

By Rajdeep Sardesai

The book brings to life the inside story of the 2024 general elections while taking a deep dive into India's polarised political battle that shaped an extraordinary election verdict.

EXPLORING SPACE

Consul General of Italy in Bengaluru, Alfonso Tagliaferri, showcases an exhibit at 'From the Moon to Mars', an exhibition celebrating the Italy-India space partnership, on display at Science Gallery, Bellary Road | **VINOD KUMAR T**

QUICKFIX

KIMBAP

INGREDIENTS

- Japanese rice
- Salt & Sugar
- Carrot
- Fried egg
- Rice vinegar
- Sesame seeds
- Cucumber
- Chilli oil

METHOD

- Cook Japanese rice and mix it with vinegar, salt and sugar.
- Slice the carrot and cucumber into thin strips and sauté the carrot lightly.
- Fry an egg and cut it into thin strips.
- Assemble the Kimbap by layering rice, veggies, eggs, and sesame seeds on seaweed.
- Roll tightly and finally drizzle with chilli oil.

Contributed by **Tultul Mukherjee**, Bengaluru

DR VIVEK ARORA

drvivekarora@hotmail.com

The expert is a senior veterinarian, Dr Gandhi's Pet Clinic, Delhi.

My year-old domestic canary is moulting often, almost twice a year. She usually does it when new members enter our house or we take her to a new environment? Is this normal?

ASK AN XPERT

It's normal for canaries to moult, but frequent moulting can be stressful for them. If your canary moults often when new people arrive or when she's in a new place, it might be her way of reacting to stress. Changes in her environment can make her feel uneasy, leading to more frequent feather loss. Make sure she has a calm, stable space and try to keep her routine consistent. If her moulting seems excessive or you have concerns, it's a good idea to check with your veterinarian to rule out any health issues.

FITBIT

BITILASANA AERIAL

(COW POSE AERIAL)

This is a beginner-level kneeling yoga pose. This stretching pose is an aerial variation of the base pose, Bitilasana (Cow Pose). The base pose involves positioning all fours (both hands and knees) on the ground, arching the back, and lifting the chest and tailbone, in which, the hammock provides additional support, allowing the practitioner to lean into the fabric and achieve a deeper stretch through the spine and shoulders. This engages the core more intensively to maintain balance and stability. Overall, the hammock enhances the spinal extension and introduces an element of suspension that adds a new dimension to the traditional pose.

STEPS

- Position yourself under the hammock for added support, with your knees and palms on the mat.
- Kneel on the mat in Tabletop Pose, ensuring the hammock hangs directly above you.
- Adjust the hammock to a height where you can comfortably reach it with fully extended arms. Grasp the hammock with both hands, maintaining a firm, even grip.
- Inhale deeply through your nose, expanding your chest. Exhale slowly through your nose, bending your elbows slightly as you lean forward. Press your hips back, gently arching your spine. Inhale, stretch your spine and lift your chest toward the hammock.
- With each exhale, deepen the arch in your back, lifting your tailbone while keeping your neck relaxed and aligned with your spine. Breathe steadily, focusing on expanding with each inhale and deepening the stretch with each exhale.
- Hold the pose for 6-8 breaths or as long as comfortable, keeping your knees under your hips and your arms extended without locking your elbows.
- To release, inhale deeply and lift your torso back to a neutral position. Exhale, release your hands from the hammock, and place them back on the floor.
- Transition to a seated position and relax in Relaxed Staff Pose for 6-8 breaths.

BENEFITS

- Stretches the chest, neck, and abdominal area.
- Strengthens the lower and upper back.
- Improves spinal flexibility and tones the spine.
- Helps massage internal abdominal organs.
- Relieves stress and promotes relaxation.
- Enhances blood circulation throughout the body.
- Alleviates back pain and sciatica.
- Reduces the risk of shoulder, neck, and spine injuries.

LIMITATIONS

- To avoid the strain, look forward.
- People with high blood pressure or heart conditions should exercise caution.
- Those prone to dizziness, vertigo, or balance disorders may find the suspended nature of the pose disorienting and unsafe. Also, pregnant woman.
- Students suffering from neck injuries, beginners or those new to aerial yoga should seek guidance from a yoga expert.
- Individuals with health concerns must consult a healthcare professional before attempting this variation.

By N Elumalai, PhD Scholar (Yoga Science) at Meenakshi Academy of Higher Education & Research, Chennai

EXPRESS CONNECT

HAVE A RECIPE OR ART WORK TO SHARE, OR A QUESTION TO ASK?

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WHATWHENWHYWHERE

Harmony in Motion

Immerse yourself in this beautiful fusion of Bharatnatyam and Kathak, featuring **Nina Rajarani**, the award-winning artistic choreographer. Experience this abstract exploration of guilt, unmet needs and societal pressure to a path of acceptance and forgiveness.

WHEN: December 16, 7pm
WHERE: Bangalore International Centre, Domlur
DETAILS: bangaloreinternationalcentre.org

Tale of Love

Experience this path-breaking, unconventional story of love in this Kannada drama, *Aashada da Ondu Dina*. Delve into the complex journey of Kalidasa's talent and love in this beautiful blend of romance with satire and reality.

WHEN: December 17, 7.30pm **WHERE:** Ranga Shankara, JP Nagar
DETAILS: rangashankara.org

Evening Cricket

Reignite your passion for cricket with this exciting 10-over cricket match. Experience the fusion of strategy, teamwork and excitement for a match that is perfect to bat away your weekday blues.

WHEN: December 19, 7pm
WHERE: Sporthood UWA Turf, Koramangala
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com

Winter Extravaganza

Kickstart your holidays on the right note with Winter Wonderland Vivero. Experience the joys of Christmas with a plethora of events, including arts and crafts, fireless cooking, storytelling and tech stations.

WHEN: December 16, 10am
WHERE: Vivero International EGL, Challaghatta
DETAILS: allevents.in

Resin Art Magic

Unleash your creative side in this guided resin beach workshop. Discover the art of crafting your unique resin masterpieces in the soft teak and serene blues of the beachside.

WHEN: December 16, 5pm
WHERE: Art Beat, HSR Layout
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com

Comedy Chronicles

Soothe your Monday blues with rising comic **Aakash Mehta**'s set. Sit back and laugh your way into this night full of jokes, punchlines and relatability.

WHEN: December 16, 8.30pm
WHERE: The Mad Bunker, Indiranagar
DETAILS: allevents.in

Antakshari Nights

Tune into a fun antakshari experience to unleash your inner singer. Whether you're jamming to classics or enjoying the Bollywood vibe, join in for an unforgettable musical evening.

WHEN: December 17, 7pm
WHERE: Casa Karaoke, JP Nagar
DETAILS: allevents.in

ARTCORNER

MEETING THE SELF

Anjali Prabhakar's artworks explore profound themes of growth, connection, and healing. Her art provides a visual language that captures emotions often left unexpressed

SWEET LI'L THING

CE takes a bite into the origins, cultivation and health benefits of the starchy, mildly sugary winter wonderkid — sweet potato

ONE of the true marvels of nature would be the starchy, mildly sugary, sweet potatoes that especially appear on the streets and kitchen tables during the misty winters.

Imagine this, you're walking through the streets of Delhi, and in the air, you can distinctly pick up the aroma of some spices from a street cart. Sweet potatoes are being roasted on coal, before preparing the famous Delhi chaat called Shakarkandi. Spicy and hot, it's like a warm blanket on the wispy days. Bengaluru might not experience the biting cold of North India, but these root veggies can also be the perfect solution for the mild chill. Though they are named sweet potatoes, the vegetable belongs to a completely different plant family. While potatoes belong to the nightshade family, sweet potatoes are part of the morning glory group, a common name for the Convolvulaceae family.

The origins of these tubers can be traced back to South America, precisely to present-day Ecuador. It is said that the plant was domesticated in Central or South America around 5,000 years ago.

By 2500 BCE, sweet potato cultivation was spread further to the Caribbeans. The Europeans came across the vegetable in Polynesia. It was during the voyages of Christopher Columbus that Europeans came across sweet potatoes.

In a 1597 book titled *Generall Historie of Plantes*, England's John Gerard mentions sweet potatoes. The book says that these vegetables are eaten roasted, infused with wine, boiled with prunes, or roasted with oil, vinegar, and salt. Gerard also mentions that it "comforts, strengthens, and nourishes the body," along with "procuring bodily lust." It's this aphrodisiac quality that made the root vegetable popular among the gentry.

These roots arrived in the African continent along with colonists in the 16th century but people preferred the locally-available yam and tapioca. However, in the US, enslaved Africans, who were tasked with cooking duties, soon learnt to use these sweeter varieties of root vegetables. It's when many went back to the continent that sweet potato became a hit there. By the 18th century, sweet potatoes became a famous holiday delicacy across the US, especially during Thanksgiving in the form of pie.

These vegetables reached Asia during the 16th century. First, it arrived in the Philippines with the Spanish. Then, the crop was introduced to China in 1594. In Japan, this vegetable arrived in the early 1600s, along with the Portuguese. And it was the Portuguese who introduced sweet potatoes to the Indian sub-continent too, sometime in the 17th century. However, new research says that they originated in India itself. The study led by Prof David Dilcher at Indiana University, with colleagues in India, found a 57-million-year-old fossil of a leaf from Meghalaya, belonging to the morning glory family, which includes sweet potatoes.

Whatever the origin, this delicacy is now highly cultivated in India, with Odisha leading in production. Though these tubers are generally consumed boiled, like tapioca, it is a much more versatile vegetable to be ignored.

(Research: Krishna PS & Nishitha Ann John)

Sweet Potato Harra

Ingredients:

- Sweet potato cubes boiled with salt: 250g
- Chopped garlic: 5g
- Finely-chopped onion: 10g
- Turmeric powder: 2g
- Chopped coriander leaves: 5g
- Olive oil: 15ml
- Paprika powder: 10g
- Lemon juice: 5ml

Method: Deep fry the boiled sweet potatoes and keep them aside. Heat oil in a pan and add the chopped garlic and onion. Saute it until brown and add turmeric powder and paprika. Add the fried sweet potatoes and lemon juice, mix well in high flame and finish by adding chopped coriander.

Sweet Potato Quinoa Salad

Ingredients:

- Boiled quinoa: 70g
- Sweet potatoes boiled with salt: 150g
- Rocket lettuce: 5g
- Sliced avocado: 15g
- Lemon juice: 4ml
- Salt: To taste
- Honey: 4ml
- Olive oil: 15ml
- Fetta cheese: 25g

Method: In a bowl, place the boiled quinoa, sweet potato, rocket lettuce and avocado slices. Add lemon juice, salt, honey and olive oil. Mix all together gently and garnish with fetta cheese.

by Chef Arun Vijayan

SWEET 'N' HEALTHY

- Holding different names in India like Shakarakandi and Madhurakizhangu, sweet potato is an excellent food source for a healthy lifestyle.
- It contains vitamins A & C, magnesium, manganese, fibre, potassium, beta carotene etc.
- Facilitates digestion by easing bowel movements and preventing gastric issues
- Supports healthy eyesight and builds better immunity
- Stabilises blood sugar
- Reduces inflammation
- Reduces the risk of breast, lung and prostate cancers by inhibiting the proliferation of cancerous cells
- Promotes healthy brain function
- Protects against sun damage
- Aids in weight management as it is a rich source of fibre and complex carbohydrates

Crispy Sweet Potato Fries

Ingredients:

- Sweet potatoes: 4 (medium)
- Oil: 3 tbsp
- Salt: 1/2 tsp
- Black pepper: 1/2 tsp

Method:

Preheat the oven to 425°F (218°C). Preheat the baking sheets in the oven. Slice the sweet potatoes into 1/2-inch sticks. Add them to a large bowl and toss with oil, salt, and pepper. Add the sweet potatoes to the preheated baking sheets. Spread the fries out without crowding them. Bake the fries, turn them once and rotate the pans once for 15 to 25 minutes. The fries are done when they look dry but swollen.

Sweet Potato Finger Roll

Ingredients:

- Boiled sweet potato: 1/2 kg
- Minced prawns: 1/4 kg
- Vinegar: 1 tbsp
- Black pepper powder: 1 tsp
- Turmeric powder: 1/2 tsp
- Big onion: 2
- Green chilly: 2
- Ginger: small pieces
- Garam masala: 1 tsp
- Egg: 2
- Bread crumbs: one cup
- Salt: To taste
- Oil: 1 cup
- Sandwich bread: 10 slices

Method: Cook the prawns marinated with salt, turmeric and black pepper. In a pan, add oil, chopped onions, ginger and green chilli, and roast them. Add garam masals, then add the cooked prawns. Mix well, add sweet potato and salt, and cook well. Press the sandwich bread like preparing chappathi dough and add the prawn-sweet potato mix. Roll it into a cylinder. Beat eggs in a bowl and dip the rolls in it. Then, immediately dip in bread crumbs and fry until golden brown.

by Priya Kolassery

JITHA KARTHIKEYAN

(The writer is an artist and curator, passionate about making art accessible to the larger public)

TALKING ART

Forbidden art

CENSORSHIP is the sword of Damocles that hangs over every creator's head. You never know what could trigger someone enough to demand banning something you've painstakingly created over months. Calls to boycott are in fact the mildest forms of censorship. The creation could be burnt and roasted, the creator could be forced to seek cover in alien lands and a strange union of people who react based on hearsay is often temporarily founded to fuel the fury. Everyone miraculously has an opinion on the subject and many social media battles are fought with no winners or losers. The only thing lost perhaps is one's sanity!

In India, censorship is certainly not a new phenomenon. It was enforced through the Press Act of 1910 by the colonial powers, to limit the freedom to express dissent in visual forms. But artists back then, found other alternative forms, one of them being prints which had religious iconography. This was considered harmless by the British and so cleverly used to spread the spirit of rebellion. However, it was not long before the authorities caught up with the trick and banned them. For instance, the image of Goddess Durga conquering evil was used to signify the future defeat of the British.

Bengali artist's Chittaprosad's sketches of the Bengal famine were banned and all copies of the booklet in which it was published were destroyed. Nothing much changed soon after the country's Independence, except that there was a shift from censorship on political grounds to ones based on morality. In a 1949 exhibition, a nude self portrait by FN Souza, one of India's most famous artists, was first covered up by the police and later seized. His studio was raided and his works almost labelled as pornography. The years that followed too, were never kind to creative spirits.

Line drawings that India's most acknowledged artist MF Husain drew in the '70s, provoked violent outbursts decades later in the '90s, after being misinterpreted as vulgar. The artist had to sadly live and die in exile, never setting foot in this country that today celebrates his work and life. In 2007, a work on display by a student at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Baroda had to face severe criticism for hurting religious sentiments and the artist was besieged with numerous legal cases. In 2012, a photography exhibition in Delhi, by Sunil Gupta had to be cancelled after an objection to the nudity in them.

If you think that it's only our nation that has a conservative lens to view art, the truth is that no country has ever been spared from the long arms of censorship. Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, has constantly been at the receiving end for his politically critical works.

Barcelona even has a museum dedicated to prohibited art. Contemporary times have been particularly hard on artists and writers as we slowly evolve into an intolerant society. Laws are interpreted according to the whims of those in power. And yet, artists brave the intimidation to continue to speak fearlessly, because art and literature are the vocal cords of society. No censorship can ever silence that!

(The writer's views are personal)

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICE

CHANGE OF NAME

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **KARTHIK R BABU**, age 44 years, R/at No. 1150, Sai Siddhi, 1st Block, Sarathy Nagar, Near HM World City, J P Nagar 8th Phase, Bangalore-560 078 do hereby declare that I have changed my son's name from **SHAARAV** to **SHAARAV .K**, henceforth he shall be known and called as **SHAARAV .K** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 14th Dec. 2024, sworn before Advocate and Notary **MAHESHA J.J.** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **MANDANNA P.M**, Father of Dhishika Mandanna .P, age 47 years, R/at No. 24, 1st Main, 3rd Street, Rajanna Layout, Horamavu Agara, do hereby declare that I have changed my daughter's name from **P DHISHIKA MANDANNA** to **DHISHIKA MANDANNA .P**, henceforth she shall be known and called as **DHISHIKA MANDANNA .P** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 12th Dec. 2024, sworn before Advocate and Notary **MEER HASSAN** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **JITENDRIYA SHARMA**, S/o. Ms. Anitha Kizhakke Thazhaveettil, aged about 20 years, presently residing at Flat No. 5207, Second Floor, Kristal Quartz-5, Kristal Campus 10, Near Yamare Bus Stop, Sarjapura Road, Sompura, Bangalore-562125, Karnataka, India, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **JITHENDRIYA SUJITH** to **JITENDRIYA SHARMA**, vide affidavit dated 14.12.2024, sworn to before K.V. Jagannath Reddy, Advocate & Notary Public, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **ASHUTHOSH KUMAR AKELA**, legal father of **HARSHAVARDHAN**, R/at SMQ 141/03, 6th Camp, Air Force Station, Jalahalli East, Bangalore-560 014 do hereby declare that both the names of my son i.e. **HARSHAVARDHAN** and **HARSHAVARDHAN RAJ** are one and the same and refers to my son only, henceforth he shall be known and called as **HARSHAVARDHAN RAJ** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 13-12-2024, sworn before Advocate and Notary **S. PRAKASH** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Y KASTHURI**, D/o No. 2594116F Ex-Naik Someswara Y, presently residing of # 11/1, Guru Murthy Street, Halasuru, Bangalore, Bangalore Urban Dist, Karnataka have changed my name from **Y KASTHURI** to **KASTHURI S**, vide Affidavit dated 09/12/2024 before **Gangaraju B N**, Advocate & Notary, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SHANTA, aged about 61 years, W/o K. Nanjunda Reddy and residing at, No.222, 8th CROSS, SAN SIRI RESIDENCY, NEAR REVA CIRCLE, OPP BSF STS ROAD, SATHNUR VILLAGE, VTC BSF Campus Yelahanka, PO: AF Station Yelahanka, District: Bengaluru, State: Karnataka, PIN Code: 560063 have changed my name to **SHANTHAMMA** vide Affidavit dated 13-12-2024 sworn before advocate and notary Y.R. Chandrasekar, Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Sri PUNITH KUMAR .S.M**, S/o Late Mahadevaswamy .S.P, age 27 years, R/at L-94, 4th Main, 10th Cross, LN Puram, Srirampuram, Bangalore North, Bangalore-560 021 do hereby declare that both the names i.e. **PUNITH KUMAR .S.M** and **PUNEETH KUMAR .S.M** are one and the same and refers to me only, similarly both the names of my father i.e. **MAHADEVASWAMY .S.P** and **MAHADEV SWAMY .S.P** are one and the same and belongs to my father only, henceforth I shall be known and called as **PUNITH KUMAR .S.M** and father name as **MAHADEV SWAMY .S.P** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 06-12-2024, sworn before Advocate and Notary **S. VENKATASUBBA REDDY** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **V. DEVARAJU**, age 64 years, S/o C. Venkatesh, presently R/at No. 33, 2nd Cross, D Costa Square, Wheeler Road Extension, Cox Town, Bangalore-05 do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **V. DEVARAJ** to **JAI DEVARAJ VENKATESH**, henceforth I shall be known and called as **JAI DEVARAJ VENKATESH** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 13-12-2024, sworn before Advocate and Notary **K.V. BACHI REDDY** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SALONEE JAIN N, W/o. KAUSHIK JAIN, resident of No.53, Khadi Commission, HBCS Vivekananda Nagar, Katriguppe, BSK 3rd Stage, Bangalore-560085, Karnataka. have changed my name to **SALONEE JAIN** Affidavit dated 09-12-2024 sworn before advocate and notary G. Ganesh, Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Smt. NAGAVENI M**, age 44 years, D/o Muniyappa, W/o Sri Kumar, R/at Muddinapalya, Shivakote Post, Hesaraghatta Hobli, Yelahanka Taluk-560 089 do hereby declare that both names i.e. **NAGARATHNA .M** and **NAGAVENI .M** are one and the same and refers to me only, now I have changed my from **NAGARATHNA .M** to **NAGAVENI .M**, vide affidavit dated 14th December 2024, sworn before Advocate and Notary **PUTTARAMAIAH** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **(OLD NAME) REKHA CHALLAGALLA**, residing at # 431, 6th Main Road, Next to Easy Bazar, Horamavu Main Road, Bengaluru 560043. have changed my name from **(OLD NAME) REKHA CHALLAGALLA** to **(NEW NAME) REKHA KALAHASTRI** vide affidavit dated 27.09.2024 sworn before Notary Y.R.Chandrasekar., Bangalore-560032.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, MOHAN SUNDER V residing at A-0901, Block A, Brigade Panorama, Anchepalya, Mysore Road, Opposite to R R Dental College, Kambipura, Bangalore 560060, Karnataka, have changed my son's name from **LOHIT GURURAJ M** to **LOHIT GURURAJ** vide Affidavit dated 13-12-2024 sworn before advocate and notary Deepa .M, Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **SRIDEVI D**, age 46 years, W/o Raghunath, R/o No. 72, C Block, 7th Floor, KSRP Qtrs, Austin Town, Viveknagar, Bangalore South, Bangalore-560 047 do hereby declare that both the names i.e. **SREEDEVI D** and **SRIDEVI D** are one and the same and refers to me only, henceforth I shall be known and called as **SRIDEVI D** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 31st August 2024, sworn before Advocate and Notary **K.V. MANI** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **GEETHA RAJAN**, aged about 69 years, wife of A.V.Rajan, residing at No.584, Prarthana, 3rd Cross, 7th Main, Vijaya Bank Layout, Bannarghatta Road, Bangalore- 560 076 changed my name from Geetha K to **GEETHA RAJAN** vide Affidavit dated 13.12.2024 sworn before notary S.Eswara Reddy to make necessary changes in my pension pay order.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **ARSHIYA TABUSSOM PANA KUNA @ ARSHIYA TABUSSOM .PK**, age 39 years, W/o K. Mohammed Tameem, presently R/at No. 2/2, 1st Floor, Haines Road, 3rd Cross, Bangalore-51 do hereby declare that all the names i.e. **ARSHIYA TABUSSOM PANA KUNA, ARSHIYA TABUSSOM PERIYA KULAM, ARSHIYA TABASSOM, ARSHIYA TABASSUM and ARSHIYA TABASSOUM** are one and the same and refers to me only, similarly **ABDUL MALIK .P.K @ ABDUL MALIK PANA KUNA** and **ABDUL MALIK PERIYA KULAM** refers to my father only, and **P.K. SHAHINA @ PANA KUNA SHAHINA** and **SHAHEENA BEGUM** refers to my mother only, vide affidavit dated 05-12-2024, sworn before Advocate and Notary **KISHWAR HUSSAIN .M.S** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **MANDANNA P.M**, Father of Nihaan Nanaiah .P, age 47 yeras, R/at No. 24, 1st Main, 3rd Street, Rajanna Layout, Horamavu Agara, do hereby declare that I have changed my son's name from **NIHAN P MANDANNA** to **NIHAAN NANAIAH .P**, henceforth he shall be known and called as **NIHAAN NANAIAH .P** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 12th Dec. 2024, sworn before Advocate and Notary **MEER HASSAN** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Manvi** (Old Name), D/o. Mr. Vikas Pruthi, aged about 20 years, R/at Flat No.D-702, Purva Panorama Apartment, Bannerghatta Road, Near Menakshi Temple, Kalena Agrahara, Bengaluru - 560 076 have changed my name as **MANVI PRUTHI** (New Name) vide affidavit dated 06.11.2024 sworn before Advocate & Notary Smt. A. Manjula, Bangalore.

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'KD IS RAW, INTENSE, AND UNAPOLOGETICALLY COMMERCIAL'

...says director Prem as he discusses his highly ambitious project *KD* along with actor Dhruva Sarja and Suprith, Head of Business and Operations for KVN Productions

A SHARADHAA

THE much-anticipated film *KD-The Devil* has officially entered the dubbing phase, with lead actor Dhruva Sarja entering the recording studio. Reportedly an action-packed drama, the film marks Prem's return to the director's chair after *Ek Love Ya*. Produced by Venkat K Narayana under the KVN Productions banner, this multilingual film stars Reeshma Nanaiah, opposite Dhruva Sarja. Its star-studded ensemble cast also includes V Ravichandran, Ramesh Aravind, as well as Bollywood actors Sanjay Dutt and Shilpa Shetty.

The film, set against the backdrop of old Bengaluru during the 1970s and 80s, is billed as a riveting tale that blends intense action with emotional depth. As per the makers, *KD*-The Devil is inspired by real-life events and explores a powerful narrative with mass appeal, while also connecting deeply with family audiences. As Director Prem shares, "*KD* is raw, intense, and unapologetically commercial. There's bloodshed, but it's not glorified—it's a story that speaks to the heart and soul of the audience."

Reeshma Nanaiah, who plays the female lead in the film, said that she is dubbing for Kannada. "It has been a wonderful experience working for *KD-The Devil*. Prem sir has been a great support, and I learnt how to dub even in my debut film under his direction," she added.

Dhruva Sarja, Prem and Suprith

'The *KD* album will break new ground'

The music of *KD-The Devil* is shaping up to be a game-changer, according to the makers. Director Prem, who's worked closely with composer Arjun Janya, promises a musical experience unlike anything seen before in Indian cinema. "The KD album will be a groundbreaking project," he states. "We recorded live music with a 256-piece orchestra in Europe, blending Western orchestral elements with Indian percussion instruments. The music has an international flair, with arrangements from Budapest, and mixing done in Mumbai, Chennai, and Bengaluru."

The album will feature six high-energy tracks, with some of the biggest names in the industry contributing to the songs. Talking about the film's first song, which will release on December 24, Prem says, "'Shiva Shiva' will be a spectacle both visually and audibly. It's a fusion of vintage soul and modern beats, and we have a grand choreographed sequence with 1,000 dancers."

With lyrics by Manjunath, the track will be available in multiple languages—Kannada, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, and Malayalam—each featuring a powerhouse lineup of singers. The Kannada version of the song features director Prem and Kailash Kher on vocals. Vijay Prakash and Kailash Kher have lent their voices for the Tamil and Telugu versions. Master Saleem joins Kailash Kher for the Hindi version, while Pranavam Sasi of Aavesham fame has sung the Malayalam version."

KD eyeing a summer 2025 release

With 150 days of shooting completed, the film only has two songs remain to be shot. The team is eyeing a summer 2025 release, with the finishing touches being applied, including "a gripping climax that will leave the audience eagerly anticipating the sequel," says the director. According to Prem, *KD-The Devil*, set in the heart of Bengaluru, will be a visual feast. The filmmakers are sparing no expense in depicting the old city through cutting-edge graphics and visual effects that transport the audience to a bygone era. "Recreating old Bengaluru through graphics is an immense task, but it will elevate the film to a whole new level," shares Prem. "The visual effects are crucial to bringing the period drama to life, and it's taking time to get it right." On the other hand, Suprith, Head- Business and Operations at KVN Productions, says, "We are planning to come as early as possible, and looking for a summer release."

My focus should be on delivering what the audience wants, not on being experimental: Dhruva Sarja

Dhruva Sarja says he is stepping into uncharted territory with *KD-The Devil*. "Every film teaches me something new, and this one is no different," says Dhruva. "I'm diving into commercial territory with KD, and I'm confident the audience will love the experience. It's a full-throttle entertainer with something for everyone, and I'm excited to see how the audience reacts to it."

Dhruva, post Martin, emphasises the importance of staying in tune with the audience's expectations. "I've realised that my focus should be on delivering what the audience wants, not on being experimental."

As the film nears completion, Dhruva Sarja also teased an exciting project announcement at the end of December. "I'm also collaborating with producer Uday Mehta once again, but the project will go on floors once I complete my other current commitments."

'Acting has a sense of musicality to it'

Director Anand Tiwari and actors Divya Dutta, Rajesh Tailang, Ritwik Bhowmik and Shreya Chaudhry discuss *Bandish Bandits* Season 2, lip-syncing to songs in the show and more

SHREYAS PANDE

MUSIC is at the center of Prime Video's *Bandish Bandits*, a show that blends classical and pop tunes. It tells the story of Radhe (Ritwik Bhowmik), a novice singer from an esteemed musical *gharana*, as he falls in love with Tamanna (Shreya Chaudhry), a rising star with an inclination towards Western music. In the second season of the show, which was released on December 13, the two have fallen apart and have decided to go their own ways. It is music that brings them together. Just like her character, Shreya feels that music has influenced her in many ways in her own life. "It is like therapy for me. I listen to it when I am happy and also when I am sad," she says.

Acclaimed actor Divya Dutta, who has joined the second season of the show and plays a music teacher, agrees with Shreya. Having worked over the years in numerous films and series, Divya feels that there is a connection between acting and music. "For me, each time I am working on a project, my brother calls to ask me if I have found the *sur* (tone) for the character. It is important to find that *sur*," she says. Rajesh Tailang, known for working in *Mirzapur* and *Delhi Crime,* feels the same. He plays the role of Radhe's father in *Bandish Bandits,* caught in the middle of following their family's tradition and paving a new way. Rajesh says, "As an actor, you have to compose your performance. Acting has a sense of musicality to it." His drama teacher had given him a piece of advice that stayed with him. "He used to say that as an actor, our dialogue delivery should be a combination of poetry and music," says Rajesh.

The show has multiple sequences in which actors are lip-syncing to the voice of playback singers. Ritwik's understanding of it was fueled by observing other actors lip-sync to a song. "As a kid, I used to stand in front of the mirror and sing like Rajesh Khanna, Dilip Kumar or Shah Rukh Khan," he says. At the same time, when he started working on the show, he found lip-syncing to be tough. "I realized that it is more than just running around trees and romancing," he quips, adding that they went through a rigorous workshop with a singing coach that helped them engage with it better. The process was similar even for Shreya, who was told by director Anand Tiwari to look at the breathing patterns of singers as they perform. "I closely observed Nikhita Gandhi, who is the voice of Tamanna in the show, and how she kept the mic at a specific distance from her mouth. These things helped me in making sense of the character," she says.

Anand is an actor himself, having worked in films like *Go Goa Gone* (2013), *Detective Byomkesh Bakshy!* (2015), *Chhapaak* (2020), and recently in *Ae Watan Mere Watan* (2024). He feels that his experience as an actor makes it easier for him to connect with the cast better when he is directing. "If they do not understand something, I can see if it is due to my communication issue or the nervousness they are facing or if they just want to go to the toilet," he laughs, adding that he knows the importance which they bring to the table. At the same time, he wants to keep them real and make them understand the role of other technicians in their performance. "The job of a director is to make everyone believe they are part of something important. I try to restrict myself to that."

The first season of the show featured fusion music composed by Shankar Ehsaan Loy. Anand says that working with the trio was a learning experience for him as they know how to blend storytelling with music. "During season 1, we sat down with them in the scripting stage and the music was written alongside the dramatic portions.

This was important because the songs were part of the narrative and the drama was enhanced through the music," he says. This time around, however, the music track of the show features younger musicians and has a more contemporary feeling to it. Anand feels that the choice reflects the change in the musical journey that the characters go through. "We look at *Bandish Bandits* as an 18-episode series, divided into two seasons, where the second part is where the newer composers have come in as the story moves in a different direction," he signs off.

CE FEATURES

Thriller Manju is Muttatti Devaraj in *Mugila Mallige*

THRILLER Manju, the veteran stunt choreographer and action hero who is known for his performances in high-octane roles, is stepping into an entirely new character in the upcoming film *Mugila Mallige*. Produced under the ANR Pictures banner by Nagaraj Reddy, and directed by RK Gandhi, who also penned the story, screenplay, and dialogues, *Mugila Mallige* features the pair from Kamarottu Checkpost, Sanath and Sahana Chandrashekhar, as the lead protagonists. It explores a complex love story woven with themes of passion and conflict.

While Thriller Manju is typically known for his powerful action and police roles, this time he takes on the role of Muttatti Devaraj, an emotional and deeply nuanced character. In this film, he shares screen space with veteran actor Bhavya, who plays his wife.

The film has already wrapped up shooting some key portions in and around locations such as Kambalipur, Katerramma, Bhaktarhalli, Poojena Agrahar, Gattiganabe, and Hosakote. The team is now heading to Sakaleshpur and Madikeri for the next phase of filming, promising more beautiful and scenic backdrops for the film.

A still from the film

Mugila Mallige has cinematography by Abhinandan Shetty, music by Aniruddha Shastry and lyrics by Rajeev Krishna. The technical team of the film also includes editor Vinay G Alluru and art director Mallikarjuna, with Thriller Manju himself handling the stunts.

The film's ensemble cast includes Rajesh, Shankar, MV Samay, Kishore Kumble, Shivu Kasaragod, Siddayya Hiremath, Ravi, Deena, Brinda, Naga, Jayaram, Yuveen, Satyavara Nagesh, Vasantha Nayak, Kiran Gattiganabe, Monica, and several others.

K Chandrashekhar to write and produce Naveen Dwarakanath's next directorial

CE FEATURES

NAVEEN Dwarakanath, who made a successful directorial debut with *For Regn*, is set to helm his next project. After captivating audiences with a heartwarming love story woven into a family drama, Naveen is shifting gears for his second venture—an action-packed family drama. This time, his mentor, K Chandrashekhar, who wrote the script, is also stepping in as the producer.

The script is currently in its final stages, and once it is complete, the makers' focus will shift to casting and assembling a technical crew that aligns with the film's vision.

A well-known name in the Kannada film industry, K Chandrashekhar previously choreographed the beloved song 'Sura Sundara' from O Mallige, starring Ramesh Aravind. The song was a massive hit, celebrated for its stunning choreography, music, and Ramesh Aravind's performance. Now, with his return to the industry, Chandrashekhar is making his mark as both a writer and producer through his production house, Apara Studios.

"It's a collaboration rooted in trust, mentorship, and a shared vision," says Naveen Dwarakanath, adding, "We will lock the script and simultaneously finalize the cast and crew."

Naveen Dwarakanath and K Chandrashekhar